



THE VALLEY PATRIOT

"Congress shall make no law..."

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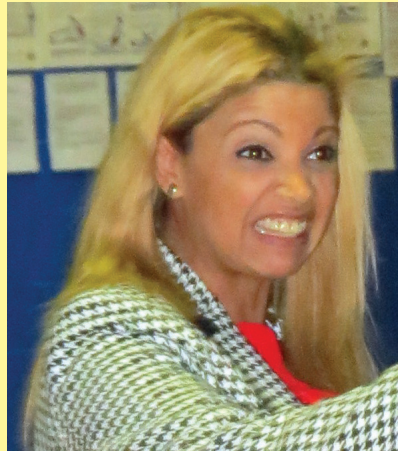
Lantigua Cronies Took \$66,000 in Accruals Before Leaving



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PATRICK BLANCHETTE
Former Econ.Dev. Director
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LORENZA ORTEGA
Former Secretary
\$11,725.89

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

SSGT. DUDLEY FARQUHAR, U.S. ARMY, 1ST/1 CAV, AMERICAL (23D INFANTRY)

Helen Mooradkian
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

They called it "the Valley of Death"—the dreaded Hiep Duc Valley in Vietnam. The enemy's stronghold. A major battleground. One where American units were nearly annihilated. Sergeant Dudley H. Farquhar, A Troop, 1/1st Cav, Americal Division (23d Infantry), as a member of Americal's Reactionary Forces was sent in with their mobility and firepower to aid embattled troops.

He served in Vietnam from January through December 1970. "Handwritten on our helmets were: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil...' I will overcome evil!" But truthfully, the enemy controlled that valley," he said.

"More than once we got trapped inside

and had to shoot our way out. One time we nearly ran out of ammunition! If it hadn't been for the heavy air strikes by Air Force and Navy bombers, we wouldn't have made it out!" said the Newburyport native who has lived in several Merrimack Valley towns, and now lives in Winthrop.

"The Hiep Duc Valley was the perfect kill zone. The U-shaped valley has only one entrance—the one way in is the only way out. Steep, heavily forested mountains surround the valley on three sides—covered with triple-canopied jungles. The enemy's heavily reinforced bunkers, dug deep in the mountainsides, are totally camouflaged. Invisible from land or air. They would lure our armored personnel carrier and tank units into this valley, then

FARQUHAR: PAGE 35

Sergeant Dudley H. Farquhar, A Troop, 1/1st Cav, Americal Division (23d Infantry), Bronze Star recipient for meritorious service in Vietnam (January–December 1970), served with Reactionary Forces who went to hot spots as combat support for other units. Since returning home, he has served as a tireless national advocate for veterans, especially POW/MIAs. He headed up "Operation TRIUMPH" ("To-Return-Immediately-Unauthorized-MIAs-and-POWs-Homeward"). He raised funds for families of POW/MIAs through the sale of POW/MIA bracelets during the 1970s anti-war sentiment. He worked 12 years to get the POW/MIA postage stamp issued (1995), and was a leading activist in getting legislation passed in Massachusetts (signed into law in 1986) which mandated that every city, town fly one POW/MIA flag from a municipal building. As a result, twenty-nine other states have now passed similar legislation.



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The Democrat’s Poverty Preservation Program and What We Should Do to Fix It

Charles Ormsby
VALLEY PATRIOT ANDOVER COLUMNIST

Fifty years ago this month, in 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an all-out War on Poverty. He vowed “to not only relieve the symptoms of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it.” To date we’ve spent over \$20 trillion on this boondoggle, approximately 1000 times the cost of the Apollo Program. Despite this huge expenditure, the percent of Americans living in poverty today, approximately 15%, is unchanged from what it was 50 years ago.

We have done vastly more damage than good.

It is one thing to screw up a ham sandwich; it is quite another to throw away \$20 trillion and destroy the lives of millions of Americans in the process.

Approximately one in three Americans receive government assistance (not including Social Security or Medicare). Today we are spending sixteen times as much in inflation adjusted dollars on poverty programs as we did in 1964.

It is time to run up the flag of surrender and try a new approach. The answer is to privatize the War on Poverty, which was really a War on Prosperity and a Poverty Preservation Program in disguise.

I propose phasing out over a 12 month period ALL government welfare spending for those capable of working. While phasing out the poverty bureaucracy and the taxes used to support these failed programs, I propose that we remove ALL

government-imposed barriers to economic growth and job creation, barriers that have led to our pathetic 59% work-force participation rate - the lowest rate since the mid-1970s.

It is time to make both job creation and working legal again on our terms, not the government’s.

It is important to understand a key principle: Governments do not produce prosperity. They only get in the way.

Some readers may be appalled by my suggestion that we end all welfare programs and let a vibrant free market cure the problems faced by the poor.

I can’t imagine why. Since government is the primary engine of wealth destruction and private enterprise is the source of wealth creation, isn’t it natural, if the goal is to increase prosperity, to curtail the interference of government and unleash the forces of the free market?

Clearly, the only way to eradicate poverty is to get everyone to attack the underlying causes. And that has to include the poor themselves.

Just think, we have approximately 50 million people designated as below the



poverty line, most of whom are largely unproductive. If there were work available for them AND they were motivated to work, 90% of the poverty problem would be solved.

The Ormsby Poverty Eradication Plan ensures

that productive jobs would be available because ALL of the artificial barriers to employment that have been erected to discourage hiring would be eliminated: NO minimum wage, NO required benefits, and NO employment or income taxes on the first \$20 thousand in wages.

Would those who are currently below the poverty line be motivated to work?

They would for three reasons.

First, because jobs would be readily available.

Second, because the initial wages earned – the first \$20,000 – would not be burdened by any deductions. It would represent spendable cash in their pocket – all of it available to support their needs.

And third, those below the poverty line would be motivated to work BECAUSE ... drum roll please ... there would be NO government handouts to support a slothful alternative.

Their choice would be to work or to depend on private charity.

Does this sound harsh? In fact, it is quite the opposite. This program would convert 90% of welfare recipients to be confident and proud, self-reliant individuals. Of course, some would choose sloth and subsequently accept the economic consequences.

I understand that, despite the availability of jobs and the motivating power of NO income, some cases of real, unavoidable hardship would remain – but the number of individuals experiencing real poverty despite their best efforts would be minuscule when compared to the number of current welfare recipients.

With many more Americans working and the tax burden greatly reduced

(because the government would no longer be subsidizing unproductive behavior), the economy would become much more vibrant and private charity would easily be able to cover the needs of those who remain at risk through no fault of their own.

If we followed this program, the poverty rate would plummet from 15% to one or two percent. With the problem less than one fifth the size of the problem we have now and the economy rapidly generating wealth, there would be no lack of help for those who are deserving of assistance.


All of us have seen it before: An individual struck by a terrible disease who lacks the resources to pay for the required medications, or a family rendered homeless by a devastating fire.

Private contributions routinely provide more than ample resources to deal with such crises. As these crises pass, those who voluntarily provided the needed charitable contributions expect recipients to pick up the responsibility for fully restoring their security and their level of comfort. Except in extraordinary situations, they are not permitted to endlessly rely on the charity of others.

This is a far cry from current government welfare programs that routinely encourage long term dependency and that foster and maintain a caste of permanent government dependents.

While public charity encourages dependency and sloth, private charity discourages such behavior and, thus, BOTH responsible and irresponsible behavior will be PROPERLY rewarded.

If we really want to dramatically reduce poverty, public welfare must be phased out and replaced with private charity. If we are willing to do this, we will finally win the War on Poverty and have a more productive and prosperous society to show for it.

 Dr. Charles Ormsby served two terms on the North Andover School Committee, co-founded of the North Andover Taxpayers Association, is a co-founder of and columnist for The Valley Patriot, broadcasts weekly opinion pieces for WCAP (980 AM) in Lowell, and is a faculty member in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Ormsby is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate degree from MIT. You can email him at ccormsby@verizon.net

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No More State Secrets, We Demand Transparency

Welcome to People’s Republic of Massachusetts.

Last month the Valley Patriot contacted the Secretary of State’s Office in search of the statewide voting list.

The list is a compilation of the voting lists of each city and town in Massachusetts and is in the hands of Secretary of State Bill Galvin’s office.

Each city and town voting list is a public document. After all, they are public voters, registering to vote in public elections of public candidates who will represent the public.

To our amazement, however, we were told by Bill Galvin’s office that the list of voters in Massachusetts is not a public document and the Secretary of State’s Office was not going to turn over the list, not even to a newspaper like The Valley Patriot.

How can this be?

How is it even possible that a voting list of any kind would be considered a

“secret document” and not accessible to the public?

We challenged the Secretary of State’s Office asking how any voting list of any kind could possibly be deemed “not a public document.”

In response they emailed us a copy of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 51, Section 47C, which states:

“Subject to appropriation, the state secretary shall maintain a central registry of voters which shall contain, if provided by the registrars, the names, addresses and effective dates of registration of all registered voters in the commonwealth The names and addresses contained in said central registry shall not be a matter of public record...”

Just imagine a one party state run entirely by Democrats who run around at election time talking about transparency in government, only to have those same Democrats declare with a vote that the public’s statewide voting list is a “secret

document” and that members of the public are not allowed access to it?

What’s more, the law does allow the Secretary of Sate to turn over the voting list to statewide candidates for public office and ballot question organizations. But, those who receive the list must sign a promise confidentiality under pains and penalties of perjury.

In other words, anyone who has the list and shares it with the public can be prosecuted.

This is a disgrace.

There is *never* any legitimate reason to conceal any voting list of any kind. These documents were produced with taxpayer dollars. The list was compiled for public elections. And the list is maintained by public officials who conceal the list using public resources.

We demand our local state reps and state senators immediately submit legislation to repeal Massachusetts General Law Chapter 51, Section 47C.

In the mean time, The Valley Patriot is looking for anyone who can “leak” the statewide voting list to Tour editor so that we can publish the list on-line for everyone to see as an act of civil disobedience against an unjust and unconstitutional state law.

Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan has given his assurance that he is willing to go to jail to protect the identity of whomever shares their statewide voting list with this newspaper if state officials take action against us for publishing the super secret statewide voting list.

We cannot imagine what excuse could have been used to declare a statewide voting list a secret document. And we promise to our readers that The Valley Patriot will fully research this law to find out who authored it as well as the legislators who voted in favor of this tyrannical law that strips the voters of their constitutional rights.

We also promise to report back to our readers exactly who those legislators are.

As The Christie Turns

Jeff Katz

VOTED AP's BEST RADIO TALK SHOW HOST

The other day, while lounging on a Sunday morning my wife turned on The Today Show which seemed more like an episode of “As Chris Christie Turns”. The latest development in the political version of Jersey Boys indicated that a politician was playing political games in awarding development money. Oh the horror! As much as I dislike large chunks of Christie’s political agenda I actually am inspired to think that a more manly guy could again reside in The White House someday. The

sort of guy who picks up the phone and makes clear to some wacko dictator that if you blank with us, we’ll blank you and the blanking donkey you rode in on. I can almost hear a President Christie describing the tactical deployment of traffic cones all over Tehran.

As the beautiful people continued to lecture me about the need to vet all presidential candidates with one notable exception, they also paid tribute to Michelle Antoinette Obama’s incredible accomplishment of turning fifty which was interspersed with meaningful bon

mots from her B-list party goers. Somewhere along the way, I did learn that her husband had granted an interview to The New Yorker magazine. This was not just your run of the mill “Hey, what me worry?” diatribe we’ve grown accustomed to. This article actually contained some of the most meaningful insight yet on the Dear Leader.

Despite Obama’s favored physical activities of running fast and furious before bowing to foreign leaders, The New Yorker piece really gives us a glimpse in to his personal feelings on sports. No, he doesn’t wax eloquent on his love affair with whatever team plays at “Cominsky Field”. He doesn’t talk about his skill at running around Congress. He speaks about the concussion risk for the adult men who play in the NFL. His final words on the subject are, “I would not let my son play pro football.”

While I have no inkling if this fictional Obama son looks like the last fictional Obama son, I do know that this one sentence provides the most accurate assessment of what defines Obama and his agenda. Some parents might prohibit their minor kids from playing Pop Warner. But once those kids hit the age of majority they used to have every right to make their own decisions and choices. In Obama’s



Jeff Katz is a former police officer, former talk show host on Talk1200AM and won the Associated Press Award for Best Talk Show In Boston two years in a row. He is now an exclusive columnist for The Valley Patriot. WEBSITE: visionaccomplished.net

America, however, adults are more like children than ever before. Dressed in footie pajamas, sipping hot cocoa and waiting for permission from their father... who apparently looks a lot like the current occupier of the Oval Office.

Follow Jeff Katz on twitter
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The Valley Patriot is not responsible for, nor do we necessarily share the opinions of columnists and contributors that are published in the paper. Columns, by definition, are opinion pieces.

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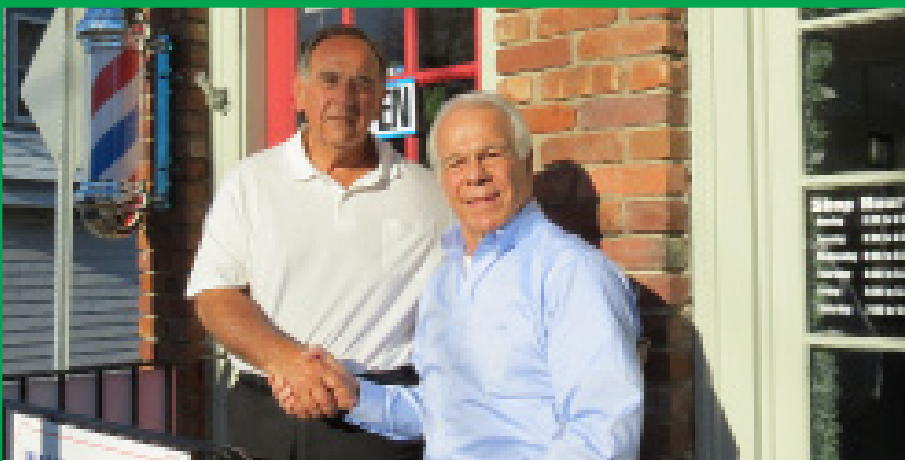
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Frank Serrano, welcomes Mr. Sid to rejoin him at his new Barber Shop in North Andover (Next to Bank of America). Frank worked at Mal's Barber Shop for the past 15 years and Mr. Sid has been at the Andover Barber Shop for the past 7 years.

Frank and Mr. Sid worked together 50 years ago at the Salisbury Barber Shop where they cut the hair of some of the biggest stars of the day who (for those of you who remember) were appearing at the Salisbury Frolics.

And now, here they are, back together again! A lot older, a lot wiser and a lot better barbers!!

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“I am standing with Marisa as a personal friend and I wanted to make sure I came to show my support and ask your support for Marisa DeFranco for Congress in the 6th District.”

Rep. DiZoglio Endorses DeFranco for Congress

State Representative Diana DiZoglio (D) Methuen, has endorsed Attorney Marisa DeFranco for Congress in the 6th Congressional District.

John Tierney is the current congressman in the 6th district he is facing DeFranco and a third democrat, Seth Molten.

“I am honored to have Representative DiZoglio’s support, from one woman to another, DeFranco said in a press release.

“I think it’s amazing to have someone in your position jump on board this early in the campaign,” Attorney DeFranco told Representative DiZoglio.

DiZoglio addressed a packed room at Prince Pizzeria in Saugus last month during the DeFranco for Congress kickoff.

“I wanted to make it a top priority today to drop by and show my support for Marisa DeFranco,” DiZoglio told the crowd.

“Marisa is one of those people who

will get up and say whatever she feels is right and really doesn’t care who has a problem with that. That’s something that we need in congress.”

“[Sometimes] there’s this this fear to do the right thing and stand up for what the constituents really need. Marisa is not going to be afraid; she is going to stand up for what she believes in and what her constituents need.”

“I am standing with Marisa as a personal friend and I wanted to make sure I came to show my support and ask your support for Marisa DeFranco for Congress in the 6th District.”

DeFranco is one of three candidates seeking the Democratic nomination for congress in the 6th district. Also running for the nomination are incumbent Congressman John Tierney, and Seth Molten.

Richard Tisei is the only Republican seeking his party’s nomination. To date there are no independent candidates declared for this race.



Have a plumbing or heating problem? Call our friend Billy Healy and tell him The Valley Patriot sent you.

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N.A. Senior Center News

Have you ever wondered how the Friends of the North Andover Senior Center support the programs and services provided by the Senior Center? Here is a look back at what was accomplished by our Friends Group in 2013. With the amount received and contributed to the Friends of the North Andover Senior Center from the 4th of July Road Race, our computer lab was updated.

The improvements made were built in counter tops for easy access to computers, along with keyboard trays. The room was painted and personal needs’ shelving was built above the computer area. A bi-fold door was added to an existing closet and 6 new red chairs were purchased. Donated art was framed and hung on the walls. New electrical wiring conduits were installed under the computer area. Electrical boxes and conduits were added to our reception area.

In activity room 1, a pocketbook shelf was added, as well as shelving in two storage areas. An accessible phone line was added to the foyer area of the Senior Center. A new Bunn coffee maker was installed to replace a broken model. Your yearly membership donations support monthly internet access within the computer lab and cover the cost of cartridge’s, printer and paper products.

The Friends of the North Andover Senior Center provided over 500 R/T ticket books from the MVRTA for North Andover Seniors to purchase at a savings of 50% off the original cost. Market

Basket food gift cards were purchased and distributed to over 30 low income elders during the holiday season. Scholarship Funding and Emergency Funds were all provided to many low income elders. A holiday breakfast was held at the Senior Center where over 120 North Andover Seniors enjoyed a hot breakfast and a visit from the “Birds of Prey”

Medical Transport Volunteer Drivers are needed! You can set your own hours. Call the Senior Center for more information. Speak with our Program Coordinator at 688-9560 for application and assistance.

Kitchen and Meals on Wheels Volunteers are needed! Anyone interested in assisting in our kitchen and prepping meals for delivery and the congregate meal site. Mornings 8:30 –12:00. Interested persons contact the Program Coordinator at 978 688-9560.

COPING WITH EARLY MEMORY LOSS: An orientation program for individuals recently diagnosed with memory loss, their family members and friends, sponsored by the Alzheimer’s Association on Tuesday Feb 11, 4-6pm. The program is free but space is limited and pre-registration is required. Please call 978-688-9560 to register.

S.H.I.N.E. Volunteers: (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) Free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to North Andover residents on Medicare; Call center for an appointment. First Tuesday of the month, 10am-1pm;

third Tuesday of the month 12-3pm.
Lecture Series: Every Monday @10am.
January 27th: Tim McCarthy, Editor of the North Andover Citizen, February 3rd: Bob Comeau - Economics, Feb. 10th: Rosemary Smedile - Happenings in North Andover.
News & Views: Every Wednesday from 10–11:30am. Come and join in the lively discussion of current events, politics, history, and you never know what else.
Meet with an Attorney: Att. Ray Can-

non, Feb 5th, 10-11:30am. Att. Ramsey Bahrawy, Feb 18th, 11:30am-1pm. Schedule with Reception-first consult is free.
Mr. Fix It: Feb 3rd and Feb 24th, 12-3pm. We repair almost as good as new. Lamps, with cords and sockets, replace watch batteries, small tables and chairs. Anything that is not listed, we will give it a shot! Your cost is \$2 - \$4 depending on work needed, plus parts. Proceeds benefit the Senior Center.
Walk in Clinic: The North Andover Senior Center and Home Health Inc/ VNA operates a wellness clinic every Wednesday from 9 am until noon. If you are a North Andover Senior, we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to check your blood pressure, blood sugar, weight and blood oxygen level. Consult privately with an RN regarding any medication and health issues that you are concerned about. There is no charge for this service, but donations are gratefully accepted.
Foot Care: RN Catherine Languedoc, Foot Care Specialist, will be available on the third Friday of every month from 9am-2:30pm. Next date is Feb 21st. Dr. Connolly is available on the second Wednesday of the month. Next date is Feb 12th 1-4 pm. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment.
Hearing Clinic: Miracle-Ear will be at the North Andover Senior Center (3rd Wed. of every month), 10am-12pm. Sign up with reception for a free screening.
Rockingham Mall Trip- Feb 24th @ 1pm, \$4.00 round trip

facebook.com/valleypatriot

After long Absence, Barry Finegold Returns Swinging!

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

You probably have heard of some movies titles like, “The Return of Batman” or “Superman Returns”, well just like these, State Senator Barry Finegold has returned! You may be asking where he went. I do not know the answer to that but what I do know is that for the entire 2013 Lawrence City Election Season, he was not to be heard from or to be found anywhere. Not one public endorsement through the whole election. Even with U.S. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas and U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren both endorsing Dan Rivera for Mayor, one would think that he would get inline and do likewise, but not even a peep was to be heard publicly.

But now that all the election excitement and hoop-la is over, Senator Finegold has returned swinging, giving new meaning to the phrase, “Three strikes and you’re out”!

The first pitch was his election reform bill (S 1975). I realize that the Senator has been away for awhile, but he would have had to be living under a rock to not know of the election shenanigans that have plagued the City of Lawrence for years. Especially this time because finally after much pressure, Secretary of State, Mr. William Galvin, sent personnel to help oversee the polls to assure former Mayor Lantigua and his faithful followers behaved themselves. After all this, one

would think that an election reform bill would have included Voter I.D. But what did we get from our Senator? Early voting online and same day (election) registration. Red flags are flying everywhere! This, Senator Finegold, is strike one!

Next pitch, the Senator makes a pledge to fight the “youthful offender” decision by our State’s Supreme Judicial Court. The ruling by the SJC makes available to juvenile killers the eligibility for parole after only serving 15 years.

Let’s make this clear, we are talking about juveniles who are found guilty by a jury of their peers of first degree murder, not manslaughter. Then they get sentence to life, but now the possibility of parole is on the table after 15 years. This is the same SJC who attacked marriage some years ago and now here they are taking another whack, this time at the entire family.

The families of the victims don’t have

the privilege of parole from their nightmare and pain, but because of our SJC, we now make sure the killers do! Senator

Finegold, along with Senator Bruce Tarr, filed a bill to require juvenile killers to serve at least 35 years before being eligible for parole.

Although a nice try, in my opinion, 35 years is not enough. I believe that no parole should be awarded to killers, juvenile or not! Life means Life! I would have made it a minimum of 50 years before any kind of consideration for parole becomes available. Strike Two!

Next pitch, Senator Finegold has announced that he will be running for State Treasurer, stating his middle-class roots as a reason he is qualified for the position. To this I say fantastic! Run Senator Run! For whatever reason you decided, that’s okay with me. But I do have another take on the “why” this decision came about. I think you are running for a higher seat



because we both know that now with your biggest supporter no longer the Mayor of Lawrence, you most likely would lose in a re-election bid for State Senator.

The only reason that you are a State Senator today is because the voters of the City of Lawrence came out and voted for you at the behest of former Mayor Lantigua. You didn’t even win in your hometown of Andover in the primaries, and the only reason you won in the general election is because you ran against a very weak opponent, Mr. Paul Adams. Strike Three, you’re out! But anyway Senator, I think that you will make a good State Treasurer, Go get em!

In conclusion, please know this, I like Senator Finegold. He is a man of faith, a wonderful husband and father to his children. An all around great guy! I just have a very different view on the politics than he does. He was all supportive of the State takeover of Lawrence’s Public Schools; I’m not and never have been. He likes BIG Government I don’t! But that’s life. God’s speed my friend.

God Bless you all! Peter Larocque



Peter Larocque is a former member of the Lawrence School Committee and is a regular columnist for The Valley Patriot. You can email him at: peterlarocque@hotmail.com

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Lawrence’s Councilor Laplante on The Road

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

This is part II of an ongoing series on Lawrence City Councilor Marc Laplante’s experiences riding along and observing city workers. Last month we let Councilor Laplante chronicle his experiences riding along with Lawrence Police. This month, the councilor talked about what he learned observing the Lawrence Fire Department, as well as Fire Alarm dispatch center.

“The first thing that struck me was how there’s a whole fraternity at the Lawrence Fire Department,” Councilor Laplante says of his experience.

“They bust on each other and give each other a hard time, but when that call comes in they stop whatever they are doing, dead in their tracks, all the fun stops, and they are all business. There’s a seriousness to these guys on every call, even though most of the calls they go on are false alarms or non-emergencies.”

“It’s a testament to the rigorous training they go through.”

“The day I spent with the Lawrence Firefighters was the day of the big Monmouth Street fire, so these guys were obviously very tired after nine hours without eating. Then another call came in before they had dinner, nobody was complaining, it was just an automatic response to go out and handle another emergency. When they had to go out again they just went out.”

“I don’t know the exact number, but from talking to the guys they say about

Part II - The Lawrence Fire Dept.

90% of the calls they go on are false alarms or non-emergencies. This is a really big problem for a city like Lawrence.”

“After observing the amount of time and resources the city spends on false alarms, I think we need to have a city ordinance to deal with the repeat offenders. If there are two or three false alarms in a calendar year, then we should be fining those individuals or businesses.”

“The Fire Department already has the authority to issue citations to people for various safety infractions.”

“Time is of the essence in any kind of emergency if they are tied up on a false alarm they can’t get to a call that might be life and death, or the difference between minimal destruction of property and a total loss.”

Laplante suited up in firefighter gear and went out on calls, with his first few being the Arlington School, The Boys Club on Water Street and a medical call at Merrimack Courts housing project.”

“There was an individual who had a hard time breathing and called in for 911 assistance. The first responders were the fire department. We were the first ones there. Then shortly after we arrived, the ambulance services arrived. I don’t think people realize our firefighters are people who respond to almost any kind of emergency. If you’ve got a natural gas

leak, a flooding issue, medical emergency, even car accidents, they have training that goes beyond just fighting fires. And they are constantly training. When they have down time on a Sunday afternoon or when there’s not as many calls, they squeeze in additional training.”

“The firefighters in Lawrence take advantage of every minute they can to make sure they are as prepared as possible for any emergency.

“It really struck me, I was really impressed that there was a real family aspect with the firefighters.”

“They live together, eat together, and they are a real tight unit. Other than the military, I don’t know any other profession that has that group dynamic, that tight a knit group of people that live and work together so affectively.”

“I really appreciated them letting me into their family, essentially to see what they are doing and how they are doing it every day.”

FIRE ALARM DISPATCH

“I spent some time with the guys and gals at Lawrence Fire Alarm to see their operations. I was particularly interested in how they dispatch the fire crews.

“How it works is that when someone calls 911, it goes directly to the police dispatch. They decide if it is a fire or some type of emergency that the fire department needs to respond to. If so, they press a button and send the call directly over to fire alarm.”

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

“At the call center not everybody is bilingual. So, if you call in to 911 and you can’t speak English, the City of Lawrence uses a service that can do an immediate translation from Spanish to English so that the 911 call taker can understand exactly what the problem is. They press a button; the call goes to someone else who comes on the line to translate. So, if caller says



in Spanish that someone has a gun at their door, the call service will translate to the call taker and they can get the emergency personnel to the location. It takes a little longer to get the information, but the service is provided and it seemed to work pretty well.

LaPlante said he thinks the city should change the requirement for call takers to mandate that they be bilingual in English and Spanish.

“You have really good people there now and I’m not saying I think we need to replace anyone, but moving forward when we hire new dispatchers, it should be required for new hires. It makes a lot of sense to make a policy for bilingual call takers. When I was observing, I didn’t see any problems with the way it is now. I want to make it clear they handled the task really well. But I can foresee a real potential problem where those extra seconds it takes to get the translator can mean life and death. I just don’t think we should be taking those kinds of chances.”

RESPONDING TO THE CALLS

LaPlante says that the dispatch system is automated. And has been in existence

LAPLANTE: PAGE 10

GLCAC Wins Education Award, Grants

LAWRENCE – The Greater Lawrence Community Action Council Inc. recently received grants totaling \$15,000 and won an award for teaching science, technology, mathematics and engineering to pre-school students in its Head Start program.

GLCAC received a \$10,000 grant from National Grid to help fund fuel assistance for families in Greater Lawrence. More than 9,000 low-income residents annually receive assistance from GLCAC in paying home heating bills.

In addition, GLCAC received a \$5,000 gift from New England Inpatient Specialists, which runs the hospitalist program at Holy Family Hospital in Methuen. GLCAC will use the funds for its workforce training initiative that assists clients in obtaining the skills necessary to find employment.

With five Head Start centers in Lawrence and Methuen, the GLCAC is a leader in early childhood education and in teaching science, technology, mathematics and engineering – otherwise known as STEM – to pre-school students. In recognition of its work in teaching students

the concepts involved in building bridges, GLCAC’s Head Start won the Innovation Award from the Massachusetts Head Start Association on January 21st.

“We are grateful to National Grid, New England Inpatient Specialists and the Massachusetts Head Start Association for the trust and recognition each has placed in GLCAC. Our employees work hard every day to meet the needs of low-income families and help lift them out of poverty,” said Evelyn Friedman, Executive Director of the GLCAC.

GLCAC encourages and promotes the improvement of community life in Greater Lawrence with special emphasis on programs in education, social services, child care, health, housing, youth employment and related fields. GLCAC last year served 29,000 individuals in Greater Lawrence. Since its inception in 1965, the GLCAC has been a consistent partner in working with local, state and federal governments and private agencies in creating opportunities and providing hope for people living in poverty.



Lawrence City Councilor Marc Laplante two summers ago, at one of Lawrence’s Mill Fires on South Canal Street that brought in firefighters from as far away as Newburyport and Lowell.

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State Transportation Bond Bill and Economic Development

Linda Dean Campbell

METHUEN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Transportation Bond Bill

With a seasoned delegation and a firm commitment to transportation linked to economic development, the Merrimack Valley saw many important local projects included in the recent transportation bond bill.

As a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I am also pleased with the bond bill from a statewide perspective.

The 12.7 billion dollar bond bill received unanimous bi-partisan support because it focuses upon assistance to both cities and towns, and economic development. It authorizes:

- 300 million dollars for cities and towns to complete local road and bridge projects;

- 350 million dollars for regional improvements to include support for projects related to the Methuen Rotary;

- 125 million dollars to expand historic parkways;

- 30 million dollars in grant money to encourage pedestrian pathways for walking and biking;

- 2.5 million dollars for expansion of the Red and Orange lines.

Transportation and Economic Development

For the Commonwealth to continue growing economically, both retaining our own educated and skilled young people

and adding others from elsewhere to our State's population, we are going to have to make steady investments in our transportation network to include public transportation.

Last year's transportation investments by the Legislature changed the financing equation in two important ways:

First – any increases in the gas tax must be used to for pay for the maintenance and operation of transportation systems, not for any other budget priority.

Secondly - the Legislature increased the gas tax from seven cents per gallon to ten cents per gallon and indexed it to inflation. Not increasing the gas tax for twenty-two years, as was

the case, did a disservice to the taxpayers and business owners of the Commonwealth.

The material cost of asphalt, a main ingredient for road repair, has gone up as much as 500% since 1991. For this reason and others, the conservative MA Taxpayer's Foundation endorsed the policy changes we made to include the gas tax increase.

I agree with their perspective because these transportation policies passed into law have contributed substantially to the solid economic growth the Commonwealth has enjoyed for the past two years.



Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence Honors Methuen Resident Timothy Meyers with Paul Cronin Award

LAWRENCE - Timothy Meyers, an eight-year volunteer mentor at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence (BGCL), was honored on Jan. 15 with the 2014 Paul Cronin Award. The recognition took place at the club's annual dinner honoring mentors and their youth protégés.

The award, named for the late U.S. Congressman Paul Cronin, is presented annually to a BGCL volunteer who goes above and beyond in using education as a tool for kids to fulfill their potential.

"I feel honored and blessed to be involved with the

Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence," Meyers said. "I don't do this for the recognition, but I appreciate the award because I respect the organization so much."

"We're very appreciative to Tim for his longtime dedication to changing kids' lives," said Markus Fischer, executive director of the BGCL. "His involvement with our Mentoring Works program has been a model of success, while providing a deep sense of satisfaction to him and the kids he has mentored."

The event's keynote speaker was club alum Radhames Nova, who credits mentors like BGCL Associate Director Steve Kelley with keeping him on the path to success during his youth. Born in the Dominican Republic, Nova attended Central Catholic High School in Lawrence on a scholarship and later returned to the organization, raising \$8 million in a capital campaign as its first director of development. Nova served with the Peace Corps in South Africa before working in the financial services industry, and is now executive director at the Boston chapter of ALPFA, the country's largest Latino professional association.

Meyers has been a juvenile probation officer in Lawrence for nearly 17 years,

and previously worked for 13 years at the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services as a casework supervisor, detention coordinator, caseworker on the specialized case management team, and head after-care caseworker. He initially volunteered

at BGCL by overseeing the weight room, and soon was asked to work one-on-one as a mentor. One of his protégés is 2012 Youth of the Year, Fortune Kalala, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo who lived in refugee camps in Africa before moving to Lawrence in

the seventh grade. Kalala graduated with honors from Central Catholic High School, where he was captain of the varsity football, indoor track, and outdoor track teams. He is currently studying pre-med at Stonehill College, with the goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

Meyers said he was proud to mentor Kalala, whom he calls "an amazing young man." In the BGCL Mentoring Works program, mentors are paired with protégés before they enter the ninth grade. Meyers said that he and Kalala shared weekly phone support sessions and met for meals a few times a month, discussing everything from tests to sports. Meyers attended Kalala's football games and track meets, and often invited him to his home where Kalala is still considered an honorary member of the family.

"You feel great interacting with someone so positive, so motivated, and that goes for the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence as well," Meyers said. "It's a cliché, but as a volunteer, you really do get a lot more back than you actually give. It's such a great experience seeing kids who are working hard get ahead."



Timothy Meyers, an eight-year volunteer mentor at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, was honored on Jan. 15 with the 2014 Paul Cronin Award. The recognition took place at the club's annual dinner honoring mentors and their youth protégés.

Liberals Continue to Jeopardize America's Global Mission

Ken Willette

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

There is an ancient philosophical saying-- "Nature abhors a vacuum." While today's science may disagree with the premise of that saying, the same statement could be readily applied to foreign affairs and human nature. In the absence of America's global leadership as a superpower, some alternative force will fill the vacuum. Too often that rival force has been and is malevolent, powerful, intolerant and inherently evil.

Throughout much of the 20th century and well into the 21st century, the free people of Europe, Asia and the Americas have often directly relied upon the economic, military and, yes, moral standing of the United States. However, a growing and disturbing trend has emerged that harshly belittles and criticizes our military's campaigns, the resolve of our fighting men and women, and the underlying motivation of our foreign policy decisions. This overreaching criticism has recently found a home with liberal bloggers and other electronic media outlets, which cast a biased and naive slant upon every foreign policy action our nation previously conducted or has recently implemented. In turn, they are

unduly influencing the youngest generations that increasingly rely upon these venues as their only source of information.

The liberal media routinely criticized the phrase "Axis of Evil", even though any reasonable and careful examination of the actions of North Korea, Iran and Iraq (before the fall of Saddam) could most certainly justify its use in the same vein as when Reagan called the former Soviet Union the "Evil Empire." It is an epic failure that many in the liberal media ignored the evidence in their news reports regarding Saddam's movements. Saddam gave safe harbor to Al Qaeda training camps, killed thousands of innocent Kurds through the deliberate use of chemical weapons, made regional threats without any provocation, consistently violated UN resolutions and sanctions, and repeatedly refused UN weapons inspectors access to his rotating facilities.

Many in the liberal electronic circus viciously attacked the surge before it ultimately succeeded in Iraq. But are we really shocked? This is the same group that condemned Bush's drone program, denounced his global war on terror networks and ridiculed his build-up of intelligence gathering assets. The same liberals continue to seek the transfer of terrorists from

military courts at Gitmo, downgrade the terrorists' actions as not being war crimes, and recommend 'peace talks' with the Taliban. How interesting is it that a liberal president has continued the drone program, adopted the Iraq surge strategy against the Taliban, maintained Gitmo and expanded the global reach of the intelligence gathering apparatus? But Obama left Iraq with no American troop presence or bases of operations, even though the terror networks have returned. He is telegraphing our exit strategy in Afghanistan to the Taliban, and is now declaring once again his desire to transfer mass-murderer terrorists into civilian prisons.

They never gave Bush credit for convincing Libya's Muammar Gaddafi to relinquish his chemical weapon stockpile. They never acknowledged the catalyst that victory in a free Iraq yielded in the various democratic movements across the Middle East. Michael Moore has often dismissed the impressive alliances Bush forged in the War on Terror. What kind of alliances did Obama form to bring Syria to the table after his redline statement on the use of chemical weapons? That's right, not our traditional European allies. Rather, the KGB president of Russia came in to save the day, which really hasn't accomplished

anything. The mass killings continue.

These hopeless liberal electronic outlets celebrate a new day in Iran with recently concluded negotiations, even though this nation remains the world's leading sponsor of terrorism. Iran still denies Israel's right to exist. Iran's presidents have denied that the Holocaust even occurred. Iran's newspapers and television shows still attack America as the Great Satan. The US and European Union sanctions and their joint freezing of Iranian assets overseas were having a very harmful and effective drain on Iran's economy. Liberals strongly opposed military strikes against any Iranian nuclear facilities, especially from Israel, but then they supported relieving economic penalties against Iran, with only marginal inspections. They blinked first.

America's expanding void of moral and military leadership in Libya, Egypt, Syria, Iran, and North Korea is making the world a far more dangerous place. The viral liberals' insistence on removing ourselves from these tough decisions will come back to haunt us. They need to believe in the better angels of America's superpower role, both past and present, in promoting democracy, defeating Islamist extremists, and destroying terrorists and the evil regimes that harbor them.

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LAPLANTE: FROM PAGE 7

for about a year.

"They can press a single button to a particular fire house and an amplifier says there is a fire, the location and

whatever details they need. Meanwhile, firefighters are sliding down the polls to head to that location. They continue to get more information on their radios while on their way to the call, as dispatchers try to get more information from the 911 caller."

"We are lucky to have so many great, dedicated, professionals in the city who really want to serve. For the most part, I witnessed that and couldn't be more proud of the people who are working our city and making a difference.

Laplanche said that the one thing he kept running through his mind while observing the firefighters was the weight of the gear he had to wear all night, and how difficult it must have been for the firefighters in

New York during the Muslim attacks on September 11, 2001.

"When I put on all that equipment and all the gear, it was heavy, it was physically stressing on the body. I just kept thinking what it must have been like on 9/11 when those firefighters had to walk up all those stairs at the World Trade Center. They weren't taking elevators; they were walking up stairs wearing all that equipment. And they knew what they were about to get themselves into. It gave me a fuller appreciation just wearing the gear."

"It made me even more mindful and sad about the tragedy of that day. It makes me think of our own guys and gals; the next time they have to go into a tragic situation it might be ... well... anything can happen. Sometimes we forget that, and we shouldn't."



Andover Attorney Peter Caruso representing The Valley Patriot

"If Attorney DiAdamo is now stating he is 'shackled' and he cannot produce that evidence, it is not the courts obligation, nor ours, to give him the keys by granting an order of protection. If his client, the City of Lawrence has not given him a waiver of confidentiality, if he doesn't have evidence to produce his burden in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, that's not our problem. And it's not the court's problem. This case should never have been brought. He should have had a waiver before he filed his complaint. This case should be dismissed."

Attorneys Cannot Divulge City Secrets in Libel Case Against vs Valley Patriot Judge Orders Mediation

JUDGE DENIES DIADAMOS MOTION FOR SECRET TESTIMONY

In August of 2008, Valley Patriot publisher and 980WCAP radio host Tom Duggan divulged to his listening audience that Lawrence's worker's compensation attorneys, William and Carmine DiAdamo, were fired by City of Lawrence under then-Mayor Michael Sullivan.

Duggan also divulged the reasons for the DiAdamo's being fired. They included the Sullivan Administration's belief that the DiAdamo Law Office had conflicts in a case they lost on behalf of the city.

DIADAMOS DEMANDED NAMES OF SOURCES, SAID SOURCES RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR FIRING

The DiAdamos had defended the City of Lawrence and lost a worker's compensation claim filed by former city worker Andrea Traficanti. Traficanti was the girlfriend of (now wife of) DPW Director Frank McCann, whom the DiAdamos had multiple dealings with.

After Duggan's broadcast, the DiAdamos demanded that Duggan reveal his sources on the story saying that those who "leaked" the story were the ones responsible for their firings from city hall, and that they would seek retribution against those responsible for their loss of income.

They also stated in emails that they would file a lawsuit against Duggan, his paper and the radio station if he refused to divulge his sources, saying that Massachusetts has no "shield law" protecting reporters' confidential sources and that they could force Duggan to reveal his sources in a lawsuit.

When Duggan refused, DiAdamo made good on that threat and filed suit against not only 980WCAP and Duggan personally, but The Valley Patriot newspaper (which had no part in the radio broadcast), McCann, Andrea, as well as some of Duggan's sources who came forward on their own.

After dragging out the case for nearly five years, William DiAdamo finally admitted in court last month that he cannot present a case against Duggan and the other defendants because he doesn't have legal permission from the City of Lawrence to discuss the Andrea Traficanti case in public.

This is critical as the DiAdamos must prove Duggan's radio statements were untrue (among other things).

The DiAdamo's loss of the Traficanti case is currently under appeal by the city. NO PERMISSION, REQUEST SECRET TESTIMONY

Over the last five years, the DiAdamos made several requests to the Sullivan and Lantigua administrations for a waiver of their client's (the City of Lawrence's)



Fired Worker's Compensation Attorney William DiAdamo asked the court to testify in secret about the Andrea Traficanti case, something he should have had before filing his case. The judge denied his request.

attorney-client privilege, so that they could discuss the Andrea Traficanti case in public and pursue a slander case against Duggan and others.

Both Mayor Sullivan and Mayor Lantigua denied all of DiAdamos requests to waive confidentiality, yet the DiAdamos continued to pursue the case anyway knowing they were not allowed to discuss the Traficanti case.

Last month, nearly five years after Duggan's broadcast, DiAdamo made a motion requesting that a judge allow him to testify in secret (called a protective order) about his involvement in the Traficanti case. If granted, it would mean DiAdamo can present his evidence against Duggan and the other defendants under confidentiality and cannot be cross-examined in open court because the information in his testimony will be sealed.

DiAdamo told the court that he cannot present his case against Duggan and the others without it.

Representing The Valley Patriot, Attorney Peter Caruso of Andover told Essex County Superior Court Judge Robert Cornetta that DiAdamo should have obtained a waiver of attorney client privilege before he filed the case, adding that if Attorney DiAdamo is shackled and cannot present evidence against Duggan, and cannot publicly discuss the Traficanti case, he certainly cannot present a case against Duggan and The Valley Patriot.

"The case from the beginning, we maintain, has no legs. Under the New York Times standard, under the standards of Massachusetts, the case just has no legs. Now, if the plaintiff (DiAdamo) had to show back in 2008 that it [Duggan's statement on the radio] was false, then he should have had the ability at that time to show that evidence."

DIADAMO: NEXT PAGE



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REVERBNATION

\$66K LAST MINUTE CASHOUT FOR LANTIGUA CRONIES

City Pays Lantigua’s Wife, Blanchette, and Camasso Accruals After Denying The Same Benefits to Sullivan Officials. Mayor Rivera Says He Will Settle Schiavone Lawsuit.

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Four Lawrence city workers took home checks totaling more than \$66,000 for unused sick and vacation time on their way out the door, as part of the defeated Lantigua administration.

The City of Lawrence paid out \$26,900.45 in unused sick and vacation time to City Councilor-turned Economic Development Director, Patrick Blanchette.

Part of Blanchette’s payout included \$10,467.75 in accruals for his work in 2014, even though Blanchette was only on the payroll for three days in 2014. That includes New Years Day which was a paid holiday he was already compensated for.

Lantigua’s wife, Lorenza Ortega was paid \$11,725.89 in accrued sick and vacation time after she was fired by Mayor Rivera from her \$50,000 job as a confidential secretary in the personnel department.

Former City Comptroller David Camasso, who was fired by Mayor Rivera on his first day in office, made \$66,000 per year and took home \$28,806.15 in accruals.

MAYOR RIVERA RESPONDS

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera said that he was not interested in engaging in the type of “pettiness” that went on during the Lantigua administration, referring to Lantigua’s refusal to pay then-outgoing Sullivan appointees like former Economic Development Director, Thomas Schiavone.

“As far as I am concerned the city got off easy,” Rivera told The Valley Patriot. “Lantigua is gone. He has been paid. His people have been paid what they are owed. We followed the law and the procedures. There are not going to be any lawsuits against the city because we did it right,” the mayor said.

Asked why former Economic Development Director Patrick Blanchette was paid \$11,725.89 in accrued sick and vacation time for 2014, even though he was only on the payroll for three days, Rivera said he really had no choice.

“The fact is, because of the way the contracts were negotiated by previous mayors, all you have to do is work one day into a new year and you are vested. You get all

your accruals for that year at 100%, which is why I was really surprised that Lantigua fought Tommy Schiavone for his accruals four years ago, and he still has not been paid four years later.

Schiavone was the Economic Development Director for the City of Lawrence under Mayors Dowling, Devers and Sullivan, but was fired by Lantigua in his first days in office.

City documents show that Schiavone is due \$74,152 in accruals, and is suing the City of Lawrence for more than \$150,000 in damages and attorney’s fees. At the time he was fired by Lantigua in 2010, Schiavone was making \$86,500 a year.

MAKING IT RIGHT

Mayor Rivera said he has instructed the attorneys handling the case as well as the city’s finance director to settle the case and pay Schiavone what he is owed.

“It shouldn’t be any different for my administration or any previous mayor,” the mayor said.

“The union contracts being what they are, say we have to pay accruals this way, but moving forward I am going to make sure the city is bargaining for better contracts so things like this come to a stop.”

As for Economic Development Director Patrick Blanchette, the mayor said that even though he was not a union employee, non-union employees get almost all the same benefits as union employees.

“They don’t have access to collective bargaining and are employees at-will but they get all of the same benefits otherwise,” the mayor added.

“And the unions should be against this too,” he continued.

“From their end, this is money that could be going for other things like benefits or pay increases. It’s in their best interest to oppose these kinds of payouts.”

DOUBLE STANDARD

Lawrence City Councilor Marc Laplante said payouts to Blanchette and others are hypocritical, given how Lantigua treated outgoing Sullivan administration officials back in 2010.

“It just shows once again the double standard that was going on in the Lantigua administration,” Laplante said.

Thomas Schiavone is the former Economic Development Director and served under Mayor’s Dowling, Devers and Sullivan. He was fired by Mayor Lantigua in 2010. Lantigua refused to pay Schiavone his accrued sick and vacation time, saying that he wasn’t entitled. Schiavone is owed \$74,152 and is suing for \$150,000 in legal fees. Mayor Rivera has ordered the case settled and Schiavone to be paid.



02/03/2014 13:58 CITY OF LAWRENCE DETAIL CHECK HISTORY									
BY EMPLOYEE NAME 01/01/2014 to 02/03/2014									
ORG	OBJ	PROJ	LOC	JOB	CHECK	PAY TYPE	HOURS	AMOUNT	DED
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010210	5110		1213	1000	000342832	505 HOLIDA	7.00	348.92	
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							NET:	2,341.51	
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010210	5110		1213	1000	000342833	505 HOLIDA	7.00	348.92	
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							NET:	1,027.55	
010210	5146		1213	1000	000342834	400 SICK T	70.00	3,489.25	
010210	5146		1213	1000	000342834	400 SICK T	155.17	7,734.67	
010210	5146		1213	1000	000342834	405 VACATI	140.00	6,978.50	
010210	5146		1213	1000	000342834	405 VACATI	174.50	8,698.20	
CHECK 01/02/2014 TOTALS:							539.67	26,900.62	
							NET:	18,414.55	
EMPLOYEE TOTALS:					NET:	21,783.61	637.67	31,785.55	
GRAND TOTALS:					NET:	21,783.61	637.67	31,785.55	
** END OF REPORT - Generated by [redacted]									

02/03/2014 14:01 CITY OF LAWRENCE DETAIL CHECK HISTORY									
BY EMPLOYEE NAME 01/08/2014 to 02/03/2014									
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001838 CAMASSO, DAVID Check Date: 01/08/2014									
LOC: 1321 ORG: 010321									
010321	5110		1321	1040	000342850	150 REGULA	21.00	787.50	
010321	5110		1321	1040	000342850	405 VACATI	7.00	262.50	
010321	5110		1321	1040	000342850	505 HOLIDA	7.00	262.50	
CHECK 01/08/2014 TOTALS:							35.00	1,312.50	
							NET:	898.03	
010321	5146		1321	1040	000342851	400 SICK T	677.50	16,937.43	
010321	5146		1321	1040	000342851	405 VACATI	127.50	4,781.24	
CHECK 01/08/2014 TOTALS:							805.00	21,718.67	
							NET:	12,087.09	
Check Date: 01/17/2014									
010321	5110		1321	1040	000342882	305 FURLOU	154.00	5,774.98	
CHECK 01/17/2014 TOTALS:							154.00	5,774.98	
							NET:	5,586.03	
EMPLOYEE TOTALS:					NET:	18,571.15	994.00	28,806.15	
GRAND TOTALS:					NET:	18,571.15	994.00	28,806.15	
** END OF REPORT - Generated by [redacted]									

“When Lantigua came in the door, he didn’t want to pay workers from the previous administration. Yet, you have guys like Tommy Schiavone suing the city, still fighting for his money. When the shoe was on the other foot, Lantigua’s wife and their friends in City Hall all expected to be paid.”

“The same people arguing in court that the city doesn’t pay accruals, took those accruals when it was their time to cash out.”

“We really need to reform on this type of stuff, we can surely mimic what the state does. If you work for the state, there is a cap on the amount of time employees get for things like sick and vacation time when employment is severed.”

“You also do not get 100% of what you accrued either. It’s crazy the amounts of money people are walking out the door with. For sure, something needs to change,” Laplante concluded.

LANTIGUAS WIFE

Mayor Lantigua’s wife, Lorenza Ortega, took home \$11,725.89 in accruals, including \$3,998.06 in furlough time she was forced to take during budget problems back to the Sullivan administration.

“In Lorenza’s case, there was a letter from Mayor Sullivan saying she was owed that time, so we paid it. I could spend my first year going over what happened in the last administration, but I just don’t think that’s productive. I paid her the furlough because Mike [Sullivan] gave her a letter saying she should be paid for previous furlough time. The good news is, we did everything by the numbers. We have a lot to get accomplished in this city, and I’m focused on moving forward.”

Rivera said that he wasn’t sure when the next contract negotiations were coming up, but assured The Valley Patriot when that happens he is going to address the issue.

DIADAMO: FROM PAGE 10

“Mr. Duggan made a statement on the radio in 2008,” Attorney Caruso told the judge.

“Five and a half years later, here we are.”

“Now, if that statement is false, all we are asking for is some evidence. We have no evidence Mr. Duggan’s statements are false and, in fact, we have affidavits from people who worked in city hall saying Mr. Duggan’s statements are true.”

“If Attorney DiAdamo is now stating he is ‘shackled’ and he cannot produce that evidence, it is not the courts obligation, nor ours, to give him the keys by granting an order of protection. If his client, the City of Lawrence has not given him a waiver of confidentiality, if he doesn’t

have evidence to produce his burden in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, that’s not our problem. And it’s not the court’s problem. This case should never have been brought. He should have had a waiver before he filed his complaint. This case should be dismissed.”

Judge Cornetta ruled on January 15, 2014.

“This, the following is therefore now ORDERED, The long pending prior motion before this Court regarding a waiver of attorney/client privilege [for the DiAdamos] is now denied, without prejudice.”

The judge also mandated that all parties attend court ordered mediation in good faith.

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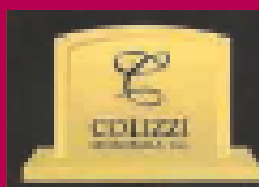
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Award Winning Mob Movie “Boys”
Made in The Merrimack Valley
Now Available on DVD!!!

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

In November I had the pleasure of attending a screening of the mob movie “Boys” at The AMC Loews Theater in Methuen.

What I saw was not what I expected. I assumed in going to see an independent film from a guy born & raised in Lawrence that I would see something decent, however what I saw, blew me away.

The quality of the story, the directing, the acting & yes, even the look of the film raised the bar for not only myself, but for other local filmmakers from The Merrimack Valley as well.

Inspired by true events, Silva produced the film with production partner Lisa Willice, who worked for amazing talents in Hollywood like Cameron Crowe & Pierce Brosnan.

In the last two years since it initially premiered, they have enjoyed several sold out screenings of the movie and taken home six awards from film festivals such as The Beverly Hills Film Festival & The New York International Film Festival, two of those awards were for Best Film & Best Director.

In addition to the film, Silva wrote several songs for the movie’s soundtrack,

which I had the pleasure of listening to the day after the screening. I’ll say again, the movie blew me away, but the CD soundtrack made my head spin. If you have not seen this movie or listened to this CD, you absolutely must.

Not only will you be supporting one of our very own Merrimack Valley boys, no pun intended, you’ll be supporting a talent that deserves to go as far as Affleck, Damon & Wahlberg did.

Silva says, for Valley Patriot readers this month only, if you purchase the movie DVD nyou receive two, along with the soundtrack and free shipping.



To purchase now, go to: boysmobmovie.com and be sure to ask your family & friends to support local talent and do the same.

You won’t be sorry. You can also purchase the film by itself at Newbury Comics in Salem, NH for \$14.99 as well. Silva will be performing one or two of the songs from the soundtrack at our very own 10th anniversary bash.

We just can’t wait to see what’s up Silva’s sleeve next. He has committed to attending our tent anniversary BAST in-March. In the meantime, we’ll continue to sit back and enjoy this mob movie masterpiece. We just hope you have the pleasure of doing the same soon as well.

One Arrested, Four Home Invasion Suspects
Still At Large After Methuen Hit with Two
Home Invasions in One Night

FROM VALLEYPATRIOT.COM

Methuen Police have arrested and charged Carlos Rivera (age 20) from Lawrence in the Larchwood Rd. home invasion last month.

Methuen Police raced throughout the city as a home invasion occurred on Ingalls Court by three armed men. One described as a black male, fled in a gray 2004 Infiniti licence plate 3PSH03.

The vehicle was spotted near Market Basket on Essex Street in Lawrence moments later, but Lawrence Police were unable to locate the vehicle.

Rivera was sought on warrants for threat to commit murder and assault with intent to commit murder.

Rivera has a lengthy criminal record with 8 arrests, three for motor vehicle infractions and the rest on violent or drug offenses.

Shortly after the police responded to the home invasion on Ingalls Ct., Methuen police were called to a second home invasion on Larchwood Road where three

suspects were seen fleeing in a silver car, two guns were used.



Police do not believe the home invasions are related but are still looking for the suspects.

On the same day as the double home invasion last month, there was a triple stabbing at the Holy family Hospital.

“It’s been a very busy day,” Chief Solomon told the Valley Patriot. “I have to say the men

and women of the Methuen Police Department acted professionally and handled this situation in a way the people of Methuen can be very proud of. We are still looking for at least four home invasion suspects and we do need the public’s help with that. If anyone has any information about the home invasion on Ingalls Ct. or Larchwood Rd. on January 8th, please call 911 no matter what town you live in and tell the dispatcher that you have information on a crime in Methuen. These people are very dangerous.

The Talk; Broaching the Assisted Living
Conversation with Aging Parents

By: Gregory Batchelder

The “assisted living” talk with an aging parent may be one of the hardest, most emotional conversations you will ever have with them. This article is not meant to make it sound easy, as if following a series of steps will make the process painless. Talking with a loved one about leaving their home should not be taken lightly. It will not be quick. It may take months to come to a resolution, and the resolution you ultimately come to may not be mutually agreeable.

The biggest hurdle most of us face is that the subject has never been brought up before. It is hard to admit that our parents are becoming weaker or frail, or that they may require help. However, at some point you've noticed – there’s moldy food in the fridge, the house is a mess, there’s apparent weight loss or frailty, there has been a medication mishap – it’s time.

If at all possible, start this conversation sooner rather than later, especially if you are not yet at the point where your loved one needs help immediately. Ask your folks what they want. Discuss how they would want to be approached when the time comes? The urgency and pressure will be less and may make the conversation less emotional and more solution oriented.

Of course we all hope to keep our loved ones in their homes as long as possible, but at some point home may no longer be a safe place, especially after a hospitalization or fall, or if one is coping with memory loss or Alzheimer’s disease.

In preparation for this conversation, remember that this is about them and how their needs will be best served. If you have siblings or close relatives, make it a team effort. Call a family meeting. Try your best to guide the conversation so that the decision is one you all come to. You may want to consider asking a third party to be involved, such as a doctor, faith leader or family friend.

•Do not let your parent feel that you've made the decision for them. The first conversation should be a discussion, not an intervention.

•Talk about options. Many of our parents have a misguided understanding that all

senior housing options are equivalent to a nursing home or hospice. Let them know what is available. Talk about solutions that can make their lifestyle more interesting and even fun.

•Be sensitive to the emotional attachment to their home, a place with years of memories. Empathize with them.

•Stress the benefits of assisted living: An independent apartment. No more shoveling snow. No yard maintenance. No plumbers, electricians, or roofers.

•Paint the lifestyle picture. Talk about meeting new people or dining with friends. Many assisted living options have a multitude of amenities from salons and fitness centers to group craft classes and outdoor recreation.

•Be clear and use concrete examples that support why you think they need help.

•When the moment feels right, and that may not be during your first conversation, offer to tour some assisted living residences together. Don’t push too hard. If your parent becomes uncomfortable, considering tabling the discussion until another day.

•If the vibe becomes uncomfortable or your loved one starts to get overly defensive, be prepared to stop, especially when memory loss is a factor.

•At some point you may notice your loved one pulling away from the process. They may need you to step in and make some decisions for them.

•Remember that this is a process. It will take time, research and resources.

Be compassionate and be prepared. Offer to find whatever information your parent may need to guide them in making and coming to terms with their decision. Be prepared to take charge if safety becomes a concern, for example if there is a fall or kitchen fire. Be patient and understanding, but also set boundaries. Finally, do not be afraid to ask for help. There are many resources available to you. You may want to consult with your local council on aging or a geriatric care manager to assist your family through this process.

Gregory Batchelder is the Executive Director at Methuen Village Assisted Living and Compass Memory Support Neighborhood.

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Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The Georgetown Republican Committee held a caucus in late January and elected 9 representatives from Georgetown to represent the committee at the upcoming March 22 Massachusetts Republican Party Convention in Boston.

Georgetown Republican Committee Chair Anne Tentindo has served as the driving force behind organizing and growing the local committee for the upcoming 2014 election cycle. Anne served a key role during the last election cycle, helping to seat local Republican Lenny Mirra in the state house. The committee will next meet in late February and welcomes all Republicans and un-enrolled residents to join them. Check the website postings at GeorgetownTODAY.org for details.

GEORGETOWN MUSICALS

Did you know that the Georgetown Middle/High School puts on the most tremendous musicals each year? This Feb. 7th and 8th, they're once again putting on a grand elaborate show at school's auditorium: Once Upon a Matress. If you have some time, drop in!

DISNEY RAFFLE

There's still time (perhaps) to purchase one of the 300 tickets which will be sold for a chance to win a Disney vacation! Tickets are \$50, and benefit Georgetown Baseball.

A DAY IN IRELAND

There's a rumor going 'round that the Knights of Columbus just might revive their special 'Night in Ireland' sing-along and story-telling and comedy

night for St. Patrick's Day weekend. Stay tuned. If it happens, we'll be sure to spread the word.

SALLY APPLGATE, CATHY L'HOMMEDIEU, THE FABRIC OF OUR COMMUNITY

Local journalist, theatre critic, and neighbor, Sally Applegate has once again touched our hearts by capturing in her local column the 39 years Cathy L'Hommedieu has dedicated to the town of Georgetown, retiring this past December from her position at the library. I do hope she won't mind us sharing just one of her quotes from Cathy, published in the Georgetown Record: "The one thing I like most about living in Georgetown is the people who live here. I tell newcomers to the library that I am glad they moved here. They chose a wonderful town. The residents of Georgetown are very special. This is a terrific town in which to live and to bring up their children." - See more at: <http://georgetown.wickedlocal.com/article/20140124/NEWS/140129048/?tag=2#sthash.DlprUrV4.dpuf>

As always, updates and details for all items at GeorgetownTODAY.org.



Lonnie Brennan is a former Georgetown Selectman, a former candidate for State Representative, a local activist and publisher of Georgetowntoday.org. You can email him at:

Lonnie@GeorgetownToday.org

Brad Jones: Killing the Republican Party from Within?

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Why do we have EBT abuse? Why do we have automatic increases to the gas tax? Why do we have increases in sales, meals, and liquor taxes? Why are we a magnet state for illegal aliens? Because extremist liberals have taken control of the Democrat party. Shamed it. Made the Kennedy-loving generation embarrassed to be called Democrats. And, they've hoodwinked the electorate, and are large and in-charge.

Meanwhile, Republican long-term State Representative and Minority Leader Brad Jones continues to wage a war on conservatives, especially conservative Republicans. What is he trying to do? We need strong conservative Republicans to stem the tide of taxpayer abuse from the extremists who hijacked the Democrat party. By attacking conservative Republicans, the Honorable Brad Jones apparently appears complicit in an attempt to kill the Republican party from within.

We've witnessed the pattern of either self-preservation (trying to cling onto his fragile house 'leadership' position), and apparent outright abuse of his fellow Republicans if they dare try to get their 'leader' to do his job. The list is long, and it's getting worse.

EBT abuse: Republican representative after Republican representative spoke out against it, rallied to try to stem the extremist Democrats and reign in waste. Why is the 'leader', Brad Jones, always a shrill voice of despair from the darkness, never out front, showing leadership? Always a few steps behind, always a little too much bluster, and too little effectiveness. Where was the leader's leadership?

Automatic tax increases: More than 120,000 taxpayers signed a petition to stop the recently enacted future automatic increases each and every year on the gas tax. A hearing was held on Beacon Hill and the extremist Democrats said there's no reason to pay attention to the petition, they need every dime to dole out and re-distribute. Screw the working commuter. Screw the taxpayer. Where was Brad Jones? Always a few steps behind, always a little too much bluster, and too little effectiveness. Where was the leader's leadership?

Meanwhile, as noted talk show host



Michael Graham noted recently, in a critical Mass Republican Committee senatorial district caucus, the Honorable Mr. Jones backed an extremist whose does dual-duty: works for Mr. Jones, and also works as a high profile member of an organization which actively works against conservatives (most notably roughly half of Mr. Jones' own Republican caucus - the conservative leaning Republicans)!

Michael Graham was correct in asking what in the world Mr. Jones is doing employing a Republican killer, and asking why in the world Mr. Jones would want that person to gain a key position on the Massachusetts Republican State Committee, a position which would have given the conservative-killer direct access to the inner workings of the MassGOP. Instead of supporting the person for such a position, he should have been actively blocking her! What was Jones thinking? Is he thinking?

Any time someone is willing to rock, Mr. Jones's comfortable yacht, he's is quick to take action against the conservative. So, we must ask the question: is he trying to kill the Republican party from the inside? Or has he just been an insider so long, a power-broker in his little corner of state house politics for so long, that he's lost touch, grown too comfortable with his plush furnishings since 1994? We need a strong conservative opposition to the extremists in Massachusetts government.

How can our party and our ranks in the legislature grown when the minority leader is hiring staff and supporting folks that work for an organization dedicated to defeat so many Republicans?



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Winter Grooming is a Must for Your Dog

Tracey Zysk
DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Snow, sleet, showers are all part of a typical New England winter. These conditions can be cold, frigid, and in some cases just downright freezing. However, even in these winter months, maintaining your pet's grooming routine is very important.

Some of the areas that need to be part of a grooming routine are the following:

1. Bath- yes, give your dog a bath. As your dog is rolling around in the snow his fur is becoming matted, wet and tangled. Not to mention, salt and sand can be stinky. As long as your room is at a warm temperature and your dog is thoroughly dried off, bathing in the winter is just fine.
2. Clean the Paws- When your dog comes in from outside, take a towel and clean the paws immediately. Sand, salt, and dirt can become caught in between the pads and cause irritations, cuts or even an infection. Also, don't forget to trim back the fur that grows on the paws. This is commonly overlooked in the winter but needs to be done regularly.
3. Trim the Nails- Don't forget to trim your dog's nails. When dogs run around outside and walk on tarred areas, this naturally helps keep your dog's nails maintained. In the winter months your dog may not be outside as much and his nails will not be getting the proper trimming that is needed.
4. Fleas Happen - Even in the winter, those little creepy crawlers are still around. Maintain the use of your flea preventative all year.
5. Teeth- Don't forget to give your dog's teeth a good cleaning. You can do this easily yourself with dog toothpaste and a toothbrush. Or you can consult your veterinarian about a professional dental cleaning.

If you are uncomfortable doing this or you do not have the time, please consult your local groomer. Keeping up with these basic steps will help ensure your dog to remain happy and healthy. Many grooming salons even run winter time specials to help encourage you to keep your dog on a routine.

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health & wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

TENTH ANNIVERSARY BASH

Next month The Valley Patriot will celebrate our tenth anniversary. It's hard to believe that this monthly newspaper was born in March of 2004. Even harder to believe is that the edition you are holding in your hand right now is the 124th edition.

It is quite an honor to look back at the groundswell of support our readers, advertisers, contributors and volunteers have given us in the last ten years.

This year the crew at the Valley Patriot promises that our Tenth Anniversary BASH will be bigger, better (but not longer) and even more fun than any other BASH we have thrown.

It will be held at the Firefighters Relief In on Market Street in Lawrence on March 21st at 7pm.

We already have commitments from radio personalities Jeff Katz and Michele McPhee, entertainer Ron Bellanti, Movie Producer Darly Silva, Singer Andreas DraMatik, and a surprise not-so-local celebrity we promise will be the funniest and most unexpected guest you will ever expect to see at a Valley Patriot BASH.

Of COURSE, our emcee is once again The Valley Patriot's own PuppyGirl, Kate Whitney (so get your tickets early!) and our co-emcee is the hilarious John Molori of Methuen who promises "an unmerciful roast".

More details on the Valley Patriot's BASH facebook page.

Tickets are \$25 ea, two for \$45 IN ADVANCE, \$30 ea. at the door.

(Tables of Ten are available)

Veterans and active duty military are FREE but you must reserve seats in advance.

You can mail you check to
THE VALLEY PATRIOT BASH
PO BOX 453

NORTH ANDOVER, MA 01845

Part of the raffle proceeds will be donated to help PuppyGirl save puppies though dog rescue One Tail at a Time.

METHUEN VILLAGE - "Grab Your Passport! Destination: Italy" at Methuen Village: Methuen Village at Riverwalk Park, a senior community offering assisted living and state-of-the-art Alzheimer's care, invites the public to enjoy their celebration of Italy featuring the piano music of Lis Leal on Wednesday, February 12 at 2:00 p.m.

Valentine's Day with Elvis at Methuen Village: You are invited to enjoy the sounds of Stan Anderson, Jr. as Elvis, followed by a Valentine's chocolate buffet on Friday, February 14 at 2:00 p.m.

The Rockoholics Perform at Methuen Village: Come join us for a dance party with the Rockoholics, featuring the music of the 1960s and 1970s on Sunday, February 16 at 2:00 p.m.

Bill Foley Performs at Methuen Village: You are invited to a performance by Bill

MARISA DEFRANCO FOR CONGRESS



Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan with Marisa DeFranco, candidate for the Democratic nomination for Congress in the 6th District of Massachusetts. DeFranco is largely ignored by the news media, so we are going to help pick up the slack here in the Valley Patriot

Foley on guitar and harmonica on Friday, February 21 at 7:00 p.m.

Methuen Village is located in the heart of downtown Methuen at 4 Gleason Street. For more information, call 978-685-2220 or visit www.MethuenVillage.com.

LAWRENCE CATHOLIC ACADEMY
Lawrence Catholic Academy announced it has partnered with the Rotary Club of Lawrence to participate in the Literacy Initiative program originally developed by the City of Tulsa Rotary Club (www.rotaryliteracy.com).

The program gives all third grade students a student edition dictionary. The entire program will be administered and funded by the Rotary Club of Lawrence. Attorney Robert F. Kelley, a Rotarian, will be visiting Lawrence Catholic Academy on Tuesday February 4, 10:45 a.m. to deliver the dictionaries to 48 LCA's third graders.

"We know how important it is to learn to read in third grade and we believe a personal dictionary will be a great help," said John Licciard, Director of Advancement for Lawrence Catholic Academy.

"Bringing the book home will enable the student to learn more quickly because their education won't be confined to the classroom," said John.

"We all use reading nearly every hour of the day, whether we are in the store reading prices on the shelves, ordering food at a cafe, understanding street signs, looking at the newspaper, or filling out an application to get a job."

"The dictionary is one the most important tools in learning to read, and we are grateful to the Rotary Club of Lawrence for all their help and support with this program", said Stacy Andrade, Assistant Principal at Lawrence Catholic Academy. For more information on Lawrence Catholic Academy's education programs, or if you would like to register your child for the 2014 -2015 school year, please call the

main office at 978.683.5822 or visit www.lawrencecatholicacademy.net.

BOSTON CELTICS JOIN FORCES WITH SAL'S PIZZA AND PROJECT BREAD TO HELP STUDENTS RAISE AWARENESS OF HUNGER

The 17-time World Champion Boston Celtics have teamed up with Sal's Pizza and Project Bread to launch a new community initiative called "Teaming Up Against Hunger presented by Sal's Pizza."

Sal's Pizza and the Boston Celtics have joined with Project Bread to give students at selected schools an opportunity to bring awareness to hunger by starring in their own Public Service Announcement (PSA) video. 4th and 5th grade students in select markets have been asked to create their own PSA's about the issues of hunger, ending hunger, and eating healthy. At the end of the video, the call to action will be to register for Project Bread's Walk for Hunger on May 4th.

This program will occur at five elementary schools in Chelmsford, Lawrence, Lowell, Woburn and Boston. In each of these areas, the elementary schools will be visited for an introductory assembly to explain the program. A Boston Celtics video crew will then come back to film the PSA's. Judges from the Boston Celtics, Sal's Pizza, and Project Bread will select the winning classroom's PSA. The final video PSA will include pieces from each classroom's production, and will serve as a powerful message on the social issue of hunger.

The PSA's will be showcased on Celtics.com and Sals-pizza.com. The winning classroom will receive a private basketball clinic with Lucky and a Celtics Legend. Immediately following the clinic, there will be an all-school pep rally where Celtics and Sal's representatives will speak and the final PSA will be shown. The winning classroom will present a check to Project

Bread, directed towards ending hunger.

For more information on Celtics team partners, visit www.celtics.com/partners.

33% UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TAX INCREASE CALLED RECKLESS
Restaurant and Business Alliance Calls for Immediate Repeal.

The Restaurant and Business Alliance called for an immediate repeal of the recent 33% Unemployment Insurance Tax Increase on Massachusetts employers that took effect on January 1st. This action was prompted by the fact that the Massachusetts' Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund currently has approximately \$800 million in their coffers.

"This increase is reckless, unnecessary and will continue to drive jobs away from Massachusetts," said Dave Andelman, President of the Restaurant and Business Alliance.

He continued, "We should repeal the increase immediately and pass additional unemployment reforms."

As a start, the Restaurant and Business Alliance made several proposals, using other states with successful systems as models. They are:

- use a 3 year average salary for employment numbers, as done in a majority of other states, rather than one year, to encourage adding jobs.
- bring unemployment insurance benefits more in line with other states to require that employees work a set amount of time to qualify for benefits

- Pass the Good Jobs Creator Fairness Act so that employers can't be punished by paying unemployment to a current employee because that employee was laid off from another job. Filed as House 1755

Dave added, "We need to focus on creating jobs, not pushing jobs away," referencing CNBC ranking the Commonwealth 49th in cost of business, CEOs ranking Massachusetts 47th in terms of doing business in a survey by "Chief Executive" magazine, Forbes Magazine ranked Massachusetts 49th in cost of doing business and 42nd in regulatory environment, and a January 2013 report from the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce citing taxes on businesses in Massachusetts are the fifth highest in the country.

Based on the most recent numbers released by the Commonwealth, there are 243,800 unemployed people in Massachusetts today. That number was 132,600 six years ago.

The Restaurant and Business Alliance is a trade association with a mission to foster the conditions for hiring and investment in Massachusetts. The R.A.B.A. focuses on legislation, media and networking within the business community.

Find more information about the R.A.B.A. at RestaurantAndBusinessAlliance.com.

The Middlesex Conservation District

TOP OF NEXT PAGE

Winter is HERE Refurbish your Uggs NOW!

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NOTEBOOK CONTINUED

will be holding its annual Spring Plant Sale on 4/25 (3-6pm) and 4/26 (8am-noon) at the 4H Fairgrounds, 51 South Chelmsford Rd, Westford, MA.

All items may be ordered in advance for best selection through March 31; the sale features tree and shrub seedlings, perennials, fruits, groundcovers and garden supplies (cow manure, rain barrels, compost bins, etc). To place an order please visit <http://www.middlesexconservation.org/> and click on 'Spring Plant Sale', or call 978-692- 9395 to request a catalog.

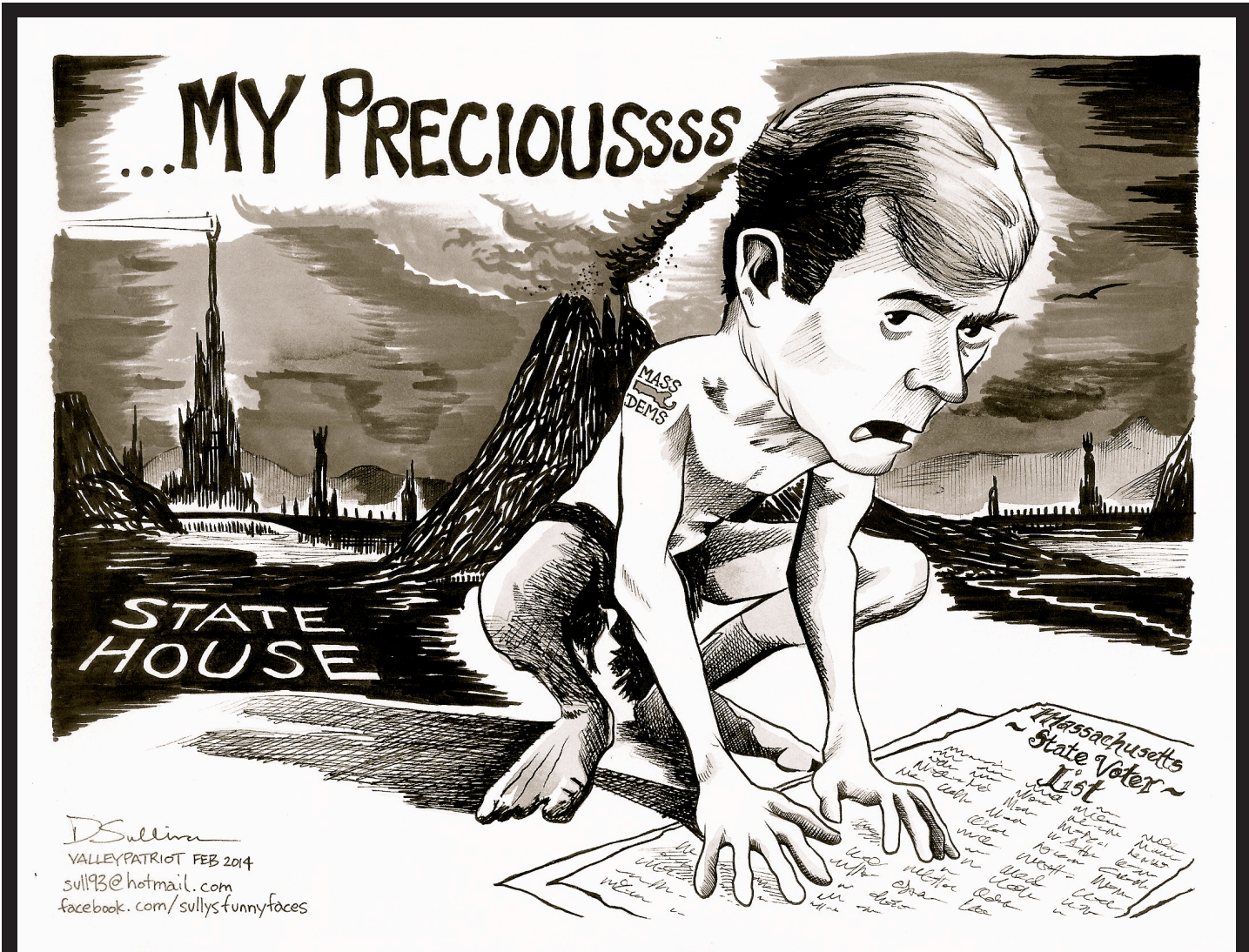
All proceeds benefit the District's conservation programs, protecting soils and waters in Middlesex County.

HAM AND BEAN SUPPER - The Lawrence Knights of Columbus Ham & Bean Dinner - **FREE WILL DONATION** for: Homemade KofC Boston Baked Beans, Old Fashioned Honey Glazed Ham, Natural Casing Hot Dogs, Bread and Butter, Hot Dog Roll, Zesty Cole Slaw, Creamy Deli-Style Potato Salad, New England Apple Crisp with Oatmeal Streusel, Coffee, Tea, Soda, Water, Free Door Prize Drawing, and a 50/50 Raffle, with Take-Out Available! Call Lawrence KofC at (855) 949-5632 The event will be held Sunday February 22nd at Saint Anthony's Parish Center, 145 Amesbury Street, Lawrence from 4:30 to 6:30PM.

NECC Professor to Present on African American Music at Two Local Libraries

As part of Black History Month, Kevin Comtois, who teaches in the Global Studies Department at Northern Essex, will share his passion for American Music in a presentation titled "From Slave Spirituals to Hip Hop: The Social and Political History of American Music".

Comtois will present at the Beverly Public Library, 32 Essex St., on Monday, Feb. 10 at 10:30 a.m. and at the Wilmington Memorial Library, 175 Middlesex Ave.,



The Valley Patriot requested a copy of the Massachusetts statewide voting list and was informed by Secretary of State Bill Galvin's Office that According to MGL CH 51, Section 47C the legislature has deemed the statewide voting list a secret document. See Editorial on page 3.

on Wednesday, Feb. 26 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Both presentations are free and open to the public.

Using recorded music, film clips, and still images, Comtois will trace the evolution and social and political context of American popular music through four

centuries ranging from slave spirituals, minstrelsy, blues, jazz, and Rock and Roll.

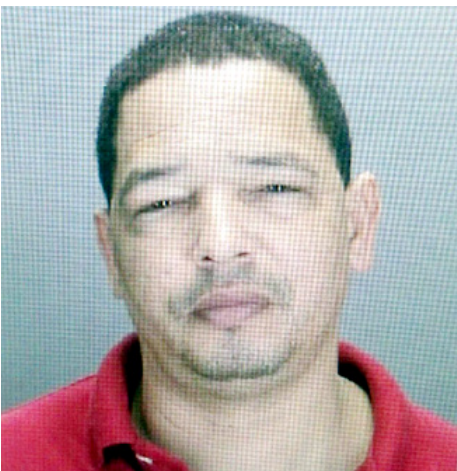
Kevin Comtois has been teaching History at NECC since 1999. In 2005 he was a recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to study Jazz with Dr. Gerald Early (an expert on the evolu-

tion of Jazz in America) at Washington University, St Louis. His presentation is part of NECC's Speakers' Bureau. For more information on the college's Speakers' Bureau visit, www.necc.mass.edu/speakers-bureau, call 978 556-3862 or email speakersbureau@necc.mass.edu.

Illegal Alien Gets 3 Years in Jail for Dealing Heroin in Lawrence, Will be Deported After Serving Sentence

Lawrence resident Angel Morales was sentenced to three years in jail last month in Lawrence District Court after being arrested by The Lawrence Police Street Narcotic's Enforcement Unit last March.

Morales was caught with a "finger" of heroin. When Morales finishes serving his sentence he will be deported, as law enforcement officials discovered Morales was an illegal alien when he was arrested.



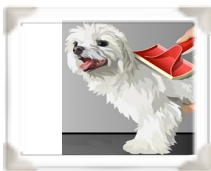
Lawrence Police Arrest Illegal Alien, Two others, Seize 40 Grams of Heroin



The Lawrence Police Special Operations Narcotics Unit arrested three suspects in the Trenton and Park Street area of Lawrence last month and seized 40 grams of heroin with a street value of \$2,000.

Police say the seller gave a false name upon arrest, and it was determined that he is an illegal alien. He is being held for immigration violations and is

being charged with possession of heroin with intent to sell, giving a false name to police officers, among other charges. Police believe he is Lidio Baez-Diaz. The two buyers were using a Lawrence street address but hail from Londonderry, NH.



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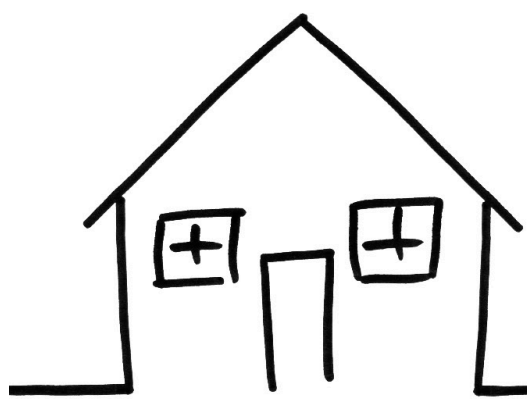
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Haverhill's Hunking School Project received praise at the state's School Building Authority Headquarters in Boston last month. Pleased with Haverhill's results are (L-R) Haverhill Councilor Colin LePage, Senator Ives, Mayor Fiorentini, Representative Campbell, Dr. Mary Malone, Assistant Superintendent, and Haverhill Superintendent James Scully.



980WCAP's Colonel Sam Poulten with Billy Costa of Kiss 108 and Paying Attention Radio Host Tom Duggan earlier this month at the Wyndham Hotel in Andover for "A Night of Sweet Indulgence"



GRANDOPENING FOR PROGRESSIVE PHARMACY SOLUTIONS in Methuen

Earlier this month, Progressive Pharmacy Solutions held the Grand Opening of their new, neighborhood pharmacy located at 39 Haverhill Street in Methuen. On hand was Mayor Steve Zanni, State Representative Diana DiZoglio and Mike Bevelacqua of the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce. See their ad on page 4.



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Rivera Team Releases 76 Page Report

An Interview with Rep. Coleen Garry

Goals for New Administration, Build New Police Station,
Put Fire Dept. In Charge of Ambulance, Build Youth Center

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera’s Transition Committee Co-Chairs, Zoila Gomez and Maggie Super Church, released a 76-page transition team report on Friday with detailed recommendations and goals for the Rivera Administration over the next four years.

While a large portion of the report addresses cultural concerns, health, the environment, growing spending on arts and other abstract issues, the Rivera administration’s report is also filled with concrete changes to the city’s public safety operations and financial policies.

Among the recommendations for Rivera’s administration as high priorities according to the report: building a new police station, installing a welcome desk at city hall, upgrade the city’s computer system and recommends the end the Lantigua-era practice of only accepting cash for city services such as parking, birth certificates and permits.

Patriot Ambulance Marketing Director John Felci (l), and Patriot Ambulance Owners Maurice Ryan and Dave Walton at Lantigua’s mayoral inauguration on January 4, 2010, just two days before Lantigua’s “transaction” with Patriot for two free ambulances and a school bus.

Patriot Ambulance Marketing Director John Felci (l), and Patriot Ambulance Owners Maurice Ryan and Dave Walton at Lantigua’s mayoral inauguration on January 4, 2010, just two days before Lantigua’s “transaction” with Patriot for two free ambulances and a school bus.

Rivera’s team also recommended that the city stop using the current Ambulance service (Patriot Ambulance was not mentioned by name) and put the EMS system under the control of the Lawrence Fire Department.

The owners of Patriot Ambulance have been embroiled in controversy and contributors to Lantigua’s campaign while Lantigua signs their contract extensions.

Patriot is also under federal investigation for donating two ambulances and a school bus to Lantigua’s adopted hometown of Teneres, Dominican Republic.

The report cites the benefits to having the firefighters take over the city’s EMS services as follows:

Firefighters respond to all emergency calls anyway, it’s a natural fit for firefighters to do this exclusively, the city does not benefit financially from the existing private contract and firefighters have more medical experience than EMS personnel.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RIVERA’S TRANSITION REPORT

- * Be the “Technology Mayor” to improve the city’s operational efficiency. All city de-

partments should be fully trained to use the MUNIS accounting system. We have paid for a good, appropriate ERP system but it is not fully utilized throughout the city departments and not all appropriate modules and functions are being used, particularly the public works functions.

- * Make sure all city departments that take in visitors’ money are able to accept credit cards and online payments to make services easier for residents to pay fines, fees, and bills.
- * Build new police department headquarters and upgrade/rehabilitate firehouses, and upgrade/rehabilitate Lawrence’s firehouses.
- * Review whether to keep the Emergency Management System (ambulance service) private or bring in-house.
- * Create an Arts and Culture Department for the City of Lawrence and hire a director.
- * Collaborate with youth organizations and agencies, and establish a Youth Task Force and a city-wide youth center for evening activities.
- * Improve the quality and quantity of high-quality rental housing stock in the city.
- * Enhance Parks & Recreation through public-private partnerships that emphasize stewardship and programming.
- * Support local policies to encourage healthier food choices.
- * Create an arts facility similar to the Firehouse in Newburyport (gallery, restaurant, and theater).
- * Create a professional museum.
- * Micro Latino Business Development – develop a program to work with Latino Businesses to assist in business plan creation, finding bridges to resources, and accessing funds for capital improvements to facilities and retail locations.
- * Enhance public library operations and services.
- * Consider adopting “CitiStat” performance monitoring and management system (used in Amesbury and Somerville, among other communities). HERE
- * Open a City Hall welcome desk on first floor so there is someone to direct visitors where to go and to answer general questions.
- * Multi-Faceted Pro-Literacy Campaign
- * Expand access to Pre-Kindergarten education: Identify a location for a new Head Start facility in a neighborhood that is currently underserved but in high need.

Rivera’s transition team says that Lawrence needs to set clear written guidelines for all public events and create a “web-based calendar of community events that is easily accessible for event organizers, as well as the general public; and reduce the “base-cost” for hosting events in the city (i.e., police details, Fire, and DPW).”

Valley Patriot publisher Tom Dugan invited State Representative Colleen Garry, (D) Dracut to his radio program on 980WCAP last month to talk about voter ID and her bid for re-election.

Garry is one of few conservative Democrats in the Massachusetts State Legislature and represents Dracut and Tyngsboro, the second most conservative district in the state.

Garry bucks the Democrat Party leaders on most of their major platform issues. She is pro-life, she supports voter ID, she supports real transparency in government and as the result of the on air discussion, has promised to help change a state law that declared the statewide voting list “not a public document”.

“I’m a conservative Democrat. I’m financially conservative. I’m morally conservative. I’m pro life. I’m the old fashioned Democrat. I grew up in a family that were Democrats, very religious, very catholic and we believed we were all there to help each other. But, you work hard and do what you have to do to get by. I think that the Democratic Party is getting more and more liberal. But, I’m not ready to give up on the Democrat Party. I think, to leave would be to give in to the liberals.”

“There are some of us who are very conservative, Steve DiNatale out of Fitchburg, Jim Dwyer out of Woburn, and Tom Stanley from Waltham. There are a few of us.”

Garry said that she thought it was time for a conservative Democratic Caucus in the state legislature to work on conservative issues. “I do think it’s time to start a conservative democratic caucus. We have a woman’s caucus, and for a long time I wouldn’t even pay dues to it because I felt like they were too liberal. They have really tried to back off on more of the controversial causes. For a long time they were too pro-choice, and now they are focusing on representing women in the legislature.”

Garry was asked why the leadership in the Democratic Party is so vehemently against Voter ID.

“There are quite a few of us who are for Voter ID.”

“I’m not sure, because we have argued that we (the state) would give free ID’s. So, it’s not the cost of it. It just doesn’t make sense to me. I don’t know whether it’s this big, non-specific idea that they have because of problems down south (in the past) but it doesn’t make any sense to me at all. Everyone should have an ID.”

“One of the arguments I’ve heard is because of the elderly who are housebound, who don’t have ID because they don’t need them for anything. My argument is if they are housebound, they are going to a doctor usually. Now, if you go to a gym or physical therapy, they take a picture of you [you get an ID]. I mean it’s very easy.”

Garry said that she was disturbed by those who claim voter ID is racist and that she



fights hard against that stereotype. She also said she was disappointed in State Senator Barry Finegold’s legislation to have same day voter registration, which would make it easier for people to commit election fraud.

“Unfortunately Barry Finegold’s legislation is going through. It’s the most absurd situation.”

Garry says one of her pet projects has been to try and change the law requiring political candidates to stand 100 feet from a polling place on election day. She said that it restricts voter access to the candidates, and candidate access to the voters. “The idea that candidates have to stay so far away from our voters, that we can’t even shake their hand is absurd.”

Garry was asked what it’s like being a minority in the majority party as a conservative Democrat.

“I have the second most republican voting district. Unfortunately, the leadership understands that I vote my district. I’m no longer part of leadership, but I vote my district.”

“I’ve learned over the years that every district is so different. Some of them [other legislators] look at me and think I am a cavewoman for some of my views. I do agree with some liberals on [some things]. In the world we live in now, the government has had to take over some areas because parents are not doing the job they need to do when bringing up their children. Whether it’s single moms doing the best that they can, or because the dads are gone, or parents having two jobs, or kids growing up too fast and being exposed to much more, there are some things I think we have to teach the kids in the schools because they are not learning it at home.”

“One of the things I am concerned about is one of the bills we passed last year about making sure we educate the kids who are expelled or suspended. We cannot let their education lapse, but they are the ones causing the problems in the schools. There are so many problems going on in the schools that are coming from the lack of parenting, or issues with ADHD ... or those kids who are integrated with special needs. The teachers are trying to teach to all those levels in that class and deal with a disruptive student, it’s very problematic.”



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Why is Lowell Wasting Your Tax Money on Hydrants?

FIRE HYDRANTS ... REALLY?

If you told me when we started this newspaper ten years ago that I would be writing a column about fire hydrants someday, I couldn't even imagine a scenario where I would want to do such a thing.

But, when I learned last summer that local taxpayers in Massachusetts are losing millions ... maybe billions ... of dollars on phony fire hydrant bid specifications, I couldn't resist the temptation of trying to make this complicated issue interesting enough to my readers to educate you and maybe even save you some money in the process.

You see, there are only a few major fire hydrant manufacturers, Darling, Kennedy, and Mueller to name a few. They provide the vast majority of fire hydrants and supplies to cities and towns across the country.

Because there are only a few companies and very little competition in the industry, these corporations can pretty much charge whatever they want when cities and towns are forced to buy new hydrants.

FIRE HYDRANT 101

If you look at the Mueller or the Darling fire hydrant (for example), they are American companies that freely reveal on their websites that their parts are made in China and shipped to U.S. to be assembled and tested here.

Looking at the fire hydrant photo on top of this column you can see the markings on the base of the Darling hydrant stamped "MMX".

MMX is a foundry in China that makes fire hydrant parts.

That means municipal officials who think they are buying ... or say they are buying ... "made in the USA" fire hydrants are really buying Made in China fire hydrants that are merely assembled in the USA.

COMPETITION

So, when smaller hydrant companies like Water Line Supply, LLC of North Andover comes along and offers to sell fire hydrants to local cities and towns at a better price, hydrants that are made *and* assembled in China ... well, funny things start to happen.

LOWELL WASTING YOUR MONEY

Let's take a look at how the City of Lowell handles purchasing fire hydrants.

In 2010, Scott Lindquist of Water Line Supply in North Andover bid, and was awarded a contract by the City of Lowell to provide fire hydrants.

"The last time we bid in Lowell we were awarded a contract. We saved the taxpayers thousands of dollars because our fire hydrants are exactly the same as the others and we are less expensive," Lindquist told the Valley Patriot.

"We supplied 16 fire hydrants to Lowell and we serviced the city very well. We were never told of any problems with the hydrants on our end, Lindquist says.

Two years later on April 5, 2012, The City of Lowell changed the requirements for purchasing fire hydrants, prohibiting the purchase of hydrants not "made in the United States."

"Lowell Regional Water Utility prohibits the use of fire hydrants not manufactured in the USA. The United Fire Flo model F-06 does not meet the specifications as it is manufactured in China."

Scott Lindquist of Water Line Supply in North Andover bid on that contract anyway, saying that the prohibition was illegal and was artificially inflating the cost of fire hydrants to the taxpayers.

His bid was rejected because, Lowell officials wrote, his hydrants were not "made in the USA".

COST TO LOWELL TAXPAYERS

According to documents from the City

LOWELL: PAGE 24



VALLEY PATRIOT
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WINTERFEST: Lowell Enjoys Egypt While New England Freezes

Lowell Housing Authority, Stoklosa School, Robinson School, Pawtucket Congregational Church, and UTEC to Install Garden Beds in April

WinterFest 2014, Friday, February 21 - Saturday, February 22nd. Lowell Kids Week, February 17th-22nd, New England Music Awards, Saturday, February 22

JFK Plaza is covered with salt to keep the bricks from freezing, but that means nothing to the famous bear who's currently enjoying much warmer weather in the northeast corner of Africa.

"I'm glad she's getting to travel the world" said Special Events Coordinator Chris Samaras. "But frankly, I'm a little surprised that she can be so relaxed when WinterFest preparations are getting really heated."

Samaras revealed today that local restaurateur Scott Plath of Cobblestones was selected as this year's Microbrew producer, along with Merrimack Valley Distributors. Plath has already submitted a list of over 25 craft brews—including America's ONLY Trappist Ale—brewed in a monastery in Spencer, MA. Plath has promised some incredible locally crafted beers for those enthusiasts who join this growing, Friday night suds smack-down! The Cobblestones owner was also awarded the food contract for Club Celsius and plans to offer international fare, working with many of the local Lowell restaurants to guarantee that there will be something for everyone. Plath says, "We are excited for the opportunity to bring fresh ideas to this already excellent event, as it evolves each year. We want festival goers from our city and visitors from throughout New England to see how hot Lowell is, in the middle of winter! Lowell is on a roll, and we intend to keep-on pushing!"

Lowell's WinterFest is in its 14th year

and is the City's signature winter event. This year's event will feature an expanded Microbrew, "Spotlight on Lowell," featuring live music by Lowell musicians from noon-5 on Saturday in Club Celsius, as well as award nominated musicians all weekend long coordinated by the New England Music Awards, ice games on JFK Plaza, and expanded food offerings including food trucks on Merrimack Street during

the day and the Cobblestones coordinated offerings in Club Celsius.

WinterFest is part of a week-long celebration in Lowell that includes additional activities at Pollard Memorial Library,

Lowell National Historical Park, Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust, the American Textile History Museum, Lowell Recreation Department, and the Tsongas Industrial History Center.

You can purchase your microbrew tickets and keep up with the latest developments in the WinterFest schedule by visiting www.lowell.org.

Be a part of the WinterFest fun and become an official event sponsor! Sponsorship opportunities are available at all levels by contacting Deborah Belanger at 978-459-6150 or dbelanger@merrimackvalley.org.

You haven't been to WinterFest until you've been on a Human Dog Sled Team. Form yours now and download your entry form by visiting www.lowell.org and clicking on the picture of Lowla.

To see everything that's taking place WinterFest Week in Lowell you can also visit the New England Music Awards and Lowell Kids Week.



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Rebecca Pearson
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Urban Elements in Newburyport carries a wide range of the highest quality products you can find here in Newburyport for your home and that are available today. Keeping things simple and to the point seems to work, and along with their amazing collection of home décor and gifts, they have great customer service as well making your experience in Urban Elements one of a kind!

All of their sofas, chairs, and upholstered headboards are made in the US and come with lifetime warranties on the frames. They represent some of the best manufacturers in the country. Their tables and cabinets (case goods) are solid wood, hand built, and environmentally friendly. Most are FSC certified which means making the product doesn't harm the environment. They specialize in meeting the needs of their customers in the most genuine way.

Urban Elements in Newburyport began back in 2007 and has expanded each year since being in business.

"I started it based on a simple idea that beautiful, high quality furniture should be made affordable. We usually see the opposite in the marketplace, right? Either really beautiful things are over the top expensive pricing out most people, or they're made really poorly with inferior materials to

become affordable. I also feel real strongly about everyone having the opportunity to make their home someplace they can feel good about.

Oprah said your home should rise up to you and I've always loved and believed in that idea." Kim Tenenbaum, Owner of Urban Elements Home and Gift. "I think we've always been that place where people from all kinds of households just appreciate. If you don't have \$2,000 to spend on a chair, we can offer one to you for as low as \$595 still made in the US and one you can choose your own fabric for.

You could probably find the exact same chair elsewhere for much more. If you are fortunate enough to be able to spend \$2,000 on a chair, you don't necessarily have to. If I can grow my business, employ people, and be successful selling a chair that other stores price at \$2,000 for \$1,500, why shouldn't I?

In the beginning, almost everyone told me I wouldn't survive doing the things that I was doing. They told me I would have to increase my prices because I was a



small store and wouldn't get the volume of customers that the big box stores got. I'm happy to say that I never listened to anything except that gut feeling inside telling me to follow my heart. It's because of that

I have complete confidence in my ability to meet the needs of every customer that walks in the door."

As an extra bonus, they deliver within a 300-mile radius in their own vehicle and with the Urban Elements staff. Along with being able to provide their customers with top notch delivery, the Urban Elements delivery men can also move their customer's furniture to other areas of their home and/or dispose of old pieces. They also arrange white glove delivery for our customers in other parts of the country.

What separates Urban Elements from other places is this lovely store is based on the idea of expansion in life, going beyond limits, and possibilities. When a customer shops at Urban Elements and gets to know the folks, they can feel the difference. "I start my day meditating and getting grounded before anything else.

Once I feel centered, grateful, and full of possibilities I go into research for the store - I'm in this constant flow of how to be better, how to be of service, how can I make certain that the value my customer gets will way exceed what they're paying."

These are deep-rooted principles that Kim, the owner, has that can't be duplicated. The store may be a store, but the way people feel when they come in, the way we choose to treat our customers, the way we price our products - everything transcends from this genuine way of being, and that is what the business was built on.

That's why people love us. It's a very real and happy experience that our customers are having. I hope to become some form of a coach to other businesses some day. I feel like I have something to teach people to help them be better and enjoy life more".

They have won many voters choices awards including: Best of Boston 2013 Best Furniture North, Best of North Shore 2013 for Best Furniture, and Best Home Décor, Best of North Shore 2012, Readers Choice for Furniture and Editor's Choice for Mome Decore. Their customer base has expanded throughout the country helping those in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Maryland, California and more find and create happy

URBAN ELEMENTS: PAGE 28

Arts and Entertainment in Newburyport for February, 2014

Rebecca Pearson
VALLEY PATRIOT NEWBURYPORT COLUMNIS

Firehouse Center for the Performing Arts: Market Square, Newburyport, MA. www.Firehouse.org

Boston Comics: Sat, Feb 8th

Get ready to laugh out loud as Laugh Riot Productions presents Boston comedians Mark Scalia and Joe Yannetty, comedy veterans who have entertained audiences from coast to coast!

Juanito Pascual Flamenco Trio: Fri, Feb 14

A mastery of traditional and contemporary flamenco creating a fresh & exhilarating sound. Virtuoso flamenco guitarist/composer/improviser Juanito Pascual has been called "one of the hottest flamenco guitarists in recent years" by National Public Radio, a major accolade which in this case is just the jumping off point for the Minneapolis native's musical style. His sound is a truly organic blend of a mastery of traditional and contemporary flamenco with influences ranging from Jimi Hendrix and the Grateful Dead to Miles Davis and J.S. Bach



Raise the Bar[re]: Feb 18-21

Voice & choreography intensive for students who crave advanced training. Grades 4-12. Calling all movers who sing, and singers who move, to join us for an advanced voice and choreography intensive! Building on the success of our Glee Club, The Raise the Bar[re] Performance Project is designed for students who crave more advanced training. Apprentices will work together as an ensemble with mentors Julie Pike Edmond and Johanna Hoyt Kimball to hone their performance techniques.

Random Acts: Sat, Feb 22

Theatre folks from Newburyport and beyond write, direct and stage a play in just 24 hours! Random Acts celebrates its 11th anniversary! Join the fun that challenges more than 50 talented (and brave) theatre folks from Newburyport and beyond to write, direct and stage a play in just 24 hours! Don't

miss this "theatrical thrill-ride" presented by Writers & Actors INK and founded by Leslie Powell and Hailey Klein. An incredible community event that has delighted audiences for nearly a decade.

The Liberator: Thurs, Feb 27

A staged reading portraying the life of the famous abolitionist Wm. Lloyd Garrison. The Liberator portrays the life of the famous abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, from his early days as a "printer's devil" apprenticed to Ephraim Allen, the publisher of the Newburyport Herald, through his long, and often lonely, years as the crusading editor of the foremost abolitionist journal of his day. It culminates with the Civil War and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. Finally, we see Garrison's retirement and last visit to the Herald offices shortly before his death.

17 State Street Café: State Street: Newburyport, MA 01950. www.17StateStreetCafe.com

Dinner and Dancing Valentine Event featuring Samantha Farrell, February 14, 6-10pm

Samantha Farrell is a Boston born and based musician who serves up her own unique and intelligent blend of jazz and folk influenced pop. She twirled onto the music scene a few years ago, when she moved from Los Angeles back to Boston to release her critically acclaimed album, Luminous. Produced by the late, great founding member and saxophonist for The Dave Matthews Band, LeRoi Moore, Luminous, a totally independent effort, soared to #7 on the national iTunes pop charts, while 6 of its songs scored placements on major cable network

shows (CW, CBS, NBC). Described by Relix Magazine as having a "prodigious, rare and undulating voice," she is a highly sought after vocalist and songwriter for EDM producers across the globe, and currently has 10 tracks out with producers from 7 different countries. Her latest release, Softly Swooning World, is a gorgeous and poetic 18-minute moment that somehow manages to be sparse and lush simultaneously; it is currently getting airplay on The River, WERS and Boston's NPR station, WMBUR. Softly Swooning World was also recently nominated into the first round of the 2013 Grammy Competition.

THRΞΞ Trio Live Music, February 21 7-9pm

Beats, Burgers and Brews presents THRΞΞ Trio. THRΞΞ is a North Shore, MA trio that surprises with songs people know, but don't normally hear bands play. With a varied set list that spans 5 decades, there is bound to be something for everyone. And with amazing three part harmony and a great stage presence, THRΞΞ is sure to get the crowd going! Drinks, dinner and dessert served from 4-9pm; Music playing from 7-9pm, Come on in out of the cold for some home style cooking and great entertainment!

Dave Drouin Live Music, February 22 7-9:30pm Event Navigation

Beats, Burgers and Brews presents David Drouin. Dave plays a mix of classic rock and modern cover songs for his solo performances. "New England singer/songwriter David Drouin has spent the last decade recording and touring 9.5 own "The Brew". Having two songs hit the national top 100 billboard charts in the last 18 months and winning the New England Music Award for best band in Boston, Drouin brings his passion and finely crafted songs night in and night out."



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LOWELL: FROM PAGE 21

of Lowell, a fire hydrant distributor called Ferguson was granted a contract to supply the Kennedy Hydrant Model KD1-D on June 13, 2013.

Kennedy is a subsidiary of larger corporation called McWane, which owns manufacturing facilities in China and according to their own website, all over the world.

So, Water Line Supply wanted Lowell taxpayers to buy his hydrants at \$1,499 per hydrant, while Lowell officials preferred to award the contract to the next lowest bidder; Ferguson, who charged the Lowell taxpayers \$1,604 per hydrant.

Let’s say over the next two years Lowell buys 200 fire hydrants at these artificially inflated prices because of a phony “made in the USA” requirement.

At Ferguson’s price (\$1,604 per hydrant) it’s a \$320,800 cost to the Lowell taxpayers.

Identical hydrants supplied by Water Line Supply (at \$1,400 per hydrant) would only cost to Lowell taxpayers \$280,000.

Now project those 2 years out to ten years. Lowell will be paying more than \$1.6M for hydrants that would have only

cost \$1.4M. That’s \$200,000 thrown out the window while your local city council struggles to find money in the budget for cops and firefighters every year.

Plus, without the “made in the USA” requirement in Lowell, the mere presence of a bid by Water Line Supply (even if they don’t get the contract) would result in Ferguson and other hydrant companies lowering their bids to compete with Water Line’s prices.

It’s a win-win for everyone... well, everyone except the (3) large hydrant corporations who enjoy a near monopoly on “American made fire hydrants” (or simply assembled here in the USA).

So, why are Lowell officials more concerned about lining the pockets of major corporations than saving every penny of your Lowell tax dollars?

One can only speculate without doing further investigation. Maybe that’s a question Lowell taxpayers should be asking their city councilors and DPW officials.

After all it’s not their money, it’s yours. And you have every right to say how it is spent.



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SHEILA’S RECIPE CORNER

Lentle & Brown Rice Loaf, Berry, Lemon, & Mint Dessert Pizza

Sheila Mullins
VALLEY PATRIOT RECIPE COLUMNIST

I was inspired by a recipe I saw, believe it or not, on Martha Stewart for this one. I was quite surprised by the results of my kitchen experiment, & my “guinea pig” (my husband Jerry) was beyond delighted with the results. We chatted while eating this & came up with several uses for this besides it being a loaf: filling for zucchini “boats” or mushroom caps & veggie burgers to name a few. What was most delightful is that it’s as good room temperature as it is hot. And is it ever moist!

For those of you who dislike curry powder, substitute your own flavours. I will say this, that the curry powder is not a prominent flavour in this despite the quantity. Have fun, experiment!



- Lentil & Brown Rice Loaf
- 3 T olive oil
 - 2/3 c brown rice
 - 2/3 c red lentils
 - 1 large onion, finely chopped
 - 1 T curry powder
 - 2 t ground cumin
 - 3 c water
 - 2 tomatoes peeled & finely chopped OR 2 carrots, grated
 - 1-1/3 c dried soybeans AKA TVP or texturized vegetable protein*
 - 1/3 c concentrated tomato paste
 - 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
 - 1 T Kosher salt
 - 1 cup fresh parsley loosely packed, chopped

In a Dutch oven that’s been heated over medium high heat the oil, then add the onion, rice, lentils, salt, curry powder, & cumin. Sauté for 5 minutes until fragrant. Add water & TVP. Bring to a boil & then reduce heat to medium, cover & cook until water is absorbed which is about 35 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add the carrots or tomatoes & tomato paste in the last 10 minutes.

Preheat an oven to 350°F. Line a loaf pan with parchment paper & let ends overhang by about 2-inches. Spray parchment with cooking spray.

Add to mixture the eggs & parsley. Mix well & pour into loaf pan. Cook for 60-70 minutes or until golden brown & firm. Let cool at least 15 minutes prior to cutting, preferably to room temperature prior to cutting.

* (Bob’s Red Mill makes TVP & it’s available locally at Market Basket)

Berry, Lemon, & Mint Dessert Pizza

I simply love, love, love berries. All types of berries. Moreover, I love dessert. I’ve never made a dessert pizza before, so I did some research on various crusts, filling types, etc. before striking out on my own. Raspberries were used here which work great, but I had blueberries in mind when I went to the store.

The supermarket was sold out of blueberries! Go figure! The good thing with berries is that almost always one can swap one type of berry for another. Sitting here typing, I was thinking that even a really nice ripe cantaloupe would be good here. I think I’d just try shaving it thin on a mandolin. The “official guinea pig” gives his squeal of approval. I know how much he just hates being the taster.

On a side note, this works beautifully to simply double the recipe for a crowd. The crust can be made up to 3 days in advance & stored in an airtight container. The filling can also be made ahead so that it’s simply an assembly process at service time.

- ¾ stick of unsalted butter, room temperature
- ¾ c sifted powdered sugar
- Generous pinch of Kosher salt
- 1 lemon, zested & the zest separated
- Juice from 1 lemon
- 1-3/4 c flour, sifted
- ½ c mascarpone cheese, room temperature
- ½ c heavy whipping cream
- ¼ c sifted powdered sugar (use to taste)
- ¼ c mint leaves, chiffonade
- 1 pint fresh berries

Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease a 9”-10” springform pan, line with bottom with parchment, & grease parchment paper.

In the bowl of a mixer, cream butter & ¾ c sugar, & salt. Add lemon juice, ½ of the zest & mix until light & fluffy. Add flour & mix until it just comes together.

Press dough evenly into prepared pan. Bake for 25 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Remove outer ring, & remove “cookie” to a baking rack to cool completely.

In a bowl (either by hand with a whisk or in a mixing bowl) beat cheese, cream, & ¼ c powdered sugar until soft peaks form. Chill until of a spreadable consistency, about 20-30 minutes.



Spread cheese mixture over crust. Sprinkle the zest over the filling. Sprinkle the mint over. Place berries last on top in a pattern. Serves 8.

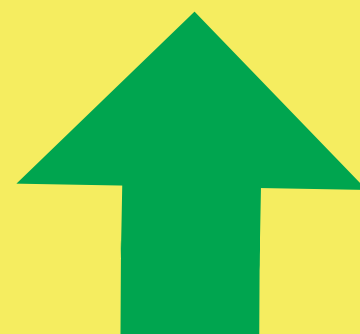
Recipes are created by Sheila Mullins & taste tested by Jerry (&/or Sheila) Mullins. Sheila lives in Newburyport & is a personal cook. She can be reached at Sheila_A_Mullins@hotmail.com & she looks forward to hearing from you.

Lawrence Public Schools: Coming Back



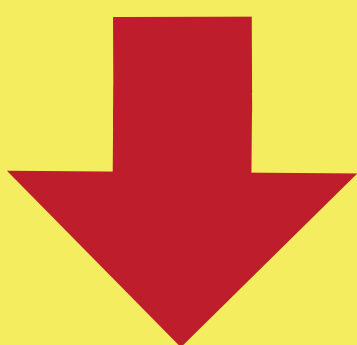
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48.1% in 2009

10.2% in 2009



5.8% in 2013

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PAYING ATTENTION! with Tom Duggan *NEW HAMPSHIRE EXTRA!*



Salem Man Starts Home Makeover 7 Years After Haffners Contaminates Basement Demers Family is Looking for Help from Valley Patriot Readers

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

I've known Mike Demers since we were in high school together at the Greater Lawrence Vocational School. And though we haven't seen each other much in the last 30 years, when Mikey called me last month asking for help from our Valley Patriot readers, I was ashamed of myself for not reaching out to him to offer our help.

So, I want to rectify that now.

Without going through the entire seven year long history of Mikey's struggle to save his mom's home in Salem, NH (we will do that next month), let me give you an overview of the hell he and his mom have been through and what you can do to pitch in and help.

In 2007, Haffners made a delivery of 200 gallons of oil to the Demers property on 21 Martin Ave in Salem.

According to Demers, a Haffners employee wasn't paying attention and left the house to make a phone call in his truck while the oil tank was being filled. Because he wasn't paying attention, the tank overfilled and blew up, broke the vent, and spilled oil all over their basement floor, walls, and ceiling as well as contaminating the ground around the foundation, and oil seeped into everything in their basement.

That was in 2007. Since then, Mike, his mom Suzanne, and his stepfather Gerald (Skip) Troisi were forced to live in a hotel, then in a trailer on their property in the hopes that the home would be cleaned and fixed so they could move back in.

For seven years the Demers family fought Haffners, their insurance company Acadia, and the two companies hired to clean up the spill; Enpro Services and Ambrose Environmental Management, Inc.

"They kept telling us it was cleaned up, it was all set, we could move back in and there were no more vapors, no more smell. But they only dug holes and tested near the tank, they treated this like it was a small spill and they tried to get away with only cleaning up part of the spill."

Demers said he had to go to state and local officials, file a lawsuit and battle with cleanup companies, regulations, and at the end of the day, they had all the high priced lawyers that we couldn't afford, so we ended up losing our case in court," Demers said.

"There was false testing and sampling and it seemed like this was never going to end. When it was all over we were left with a mountain of debt and a house that is still contaminated."

"We can still smell the vapors, it's made

me sick, it's made my mom and my stepfather sick, and even though a portion of the problem has been cleaned up, we still have a long way to go before this house is completely safe from the fumes of all that oil in the ground, in the walls, in the foundation."

HOME MAKEOVER

Demers says despite the fact that he and his family have been dealing with the problem for so long, he is determined to get his mom's home fixed up and restore it to the condition it was in before Haffners blew his tank.

"I've decided to do a home makeover and reach out to the community to see if we can get construction supplies and equipment that we need to finish the job that wasn't done," Demers said. We've spent so much money and we have so much debt that we just can't do it ourselves."

Demers is looking for building materials like cement to replace the foundation, studs, dry wall, whatever can be donated so that his family can live in a house that is clean, safe, and no longer a health hazard to live in.

"We still have to replace the foundation and put up new walls, it's a big project despite the work that's already been done. I feel like my mom deserves this. It's my mom, you know. She shouldn't have to suffer because of someone else's mistakes."

"We want to put in a vapor barrier below the home, scoop out all the contaminants as is recommended by the State of NH, and repair the damage that was done in 2007."

Demers says that they have had help from some local contractors, independent tradesmen and volunteers in the community.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

I know how generous our Valley Patriot readers are, and I also know that there are so many of you who do amazing things to help the community every day without asking for or receiving any recognition for your efforts.

That's why The Valley Patriot is offering free publicity in the Valley Patriot to any company or individual who reaches out to the Demers family to help them get the construction supplies, workers, and/or professional expertise that is needed to restore the Demers home to the condition it was in before the oil spill took place.

You can visit Mikey's website at help-momgethome.com or call Mike Demers at 603-247-3867.

New Hampshire's Marijuana Law Betrays Small Government Principles

D.J. Bettencourt

VALLEY PATRIOT NEW HAMPSHIRE COLUMNIST

Granite Staters might assume that New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan's pledge to veto legislation passed this month to legalize marijuana would end the discussion of the issue for this legislative session. Instead, it has intensified the debate at a time when marijuana policy is making history and emerging as a major national issue. At the same time, it has exposed an unfortunate and massive hypocrisy within the pro-freedom movement.

Earlier this month, the New Hampshire House of Representatives approved legislation legalizing marijuana for recreational use. In doing so, it gave New Hampshire the distinction of having the first legislative body ever to pass such a measure. This comes the same month that Colorado and Washington begin legal sales of pot. However, in those instances, voters approving ballot initiatives, not lawmakers, made it possible. The issue is rapidly growing on the national stage as marijuana advocates have secured enough support to put legalization on the ballot in Alaska and have their eyes on several other states.

Marijuana policy is an uncharacteristic topic for me. It is one of the few polarizing issues that I do not have a passionate position. Abortion? I'm pro-life. Gay marriage? I'm for it. Obamacare? I despise it. Marijuana policy? I could not care less. For my money, I think smoking pot for non-medical uses is boorish and immature but if individuals want to engage in it in such a way that does not endanger the public, then fine. Someday someone will have to adequately explain to me how we test and prevent people from getting high and getting behind the wheel of a car.

That said, the particular legislation passed by the New Hampshire House is an affront to everything supporters of free markets and small government purport to support.

Now, before my libertarian and conservative friends scream "RINO" or "anti-freedom" allow me to explain. As a conservative, I do not support needless or expansive new taxes that grow government. Nor do I support massive new regulatory structures. Burdensome taxes and regulations are an anathema to free markets. What does this have to do with New Hampshire's marijuana legalization?

New Hampshire's version of legalization comes with more than a few strings attached. The legislation legalizes up to 1 ounce of marijuana for recreational use for anyone age 21 and older. It also would allow adults to grow up to six plants for personal use. All innocuous, in my view. However, it goes on to impose a new \$30

wholesale tax on every ounce of marijuana sold. The going rate for a medium-quality ounce of marijuana in New Hampshire is about \$290, according to priceofweed.com, which collects submissions of local cost. Additionally, the legislation only allows licensed and heavily regulated marijuana retail stores and licensed facilities to cultivate and manufacture marijuana.

For my conservative principles, this new tax and massive new regulatory scheme would make the legislation a non-starter. No Republican who supported

this legislation will ever be able to say that they have never supported a new tax that grew government. Yet to my surprise, liberty activists declared passage of such measures as being on "the right side of history" and praised supportive legislators as "freedom fighters" stopping the immoral "war on drugs."

These developments are as extraordinary as they are confounding. I think the vast majority of the public can agree that it is a waste of time and public resources to throw individuals in jail for smoking a joint or using weed for medical purposes. However, in advocating for full legalization, conservatives appear to be embracing the principles of big government liberalism for the sake of the freedom to get high. What a sorry way to sell out your beliefs. Is smoking weed so important to justify forsaking and undermining the free market and small government?

Were this not bad enough, passage of the marijuana legislation dominated media headlines across New Hampshire for several weeks, detracting from the legislature's more important duties, such as job creation and maintaining a balanced budget and the state's fiscal health.

Make no mistake, Governor Hassan's pledge to veto marijuana legislation is not motivated by her concerns for keeping taxes and regulations less burdensome. Rather, it is likely that Hassan prefers to stay on the safe side of a controversial issue in an election year. In the end, Hassan is right for the wrong reasons. Equally unfortunate is that some conservatives have prioritized marijuana legalization over smaller government and the free market.



D.J. Bettencourt served as a State Representative in the New Hampshire House of Representatives from 2005 to 2012 and was the House Majority Leader for the 2011-2012 legislative term.

He currently works as a special education academic assistant and is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Salem Animal Rescue League.

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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

Fifty Shades of Gay

D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

The gay community is just as diverse and varied as our heterosexual counter community. I would also venture to say that we are probably a bit more unique and colorful. I am painfully aware that those who are not part of the gay community have never had a 'close encounter' with a gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgendered person, or maybe they have a bitter taste in their mouths and don't like it. However, it still amazes me to what anti-gay heterosexuals will compare us to. A woman named Melissa commented on my January column saying, "It is still shocking to me to see the level of ignorance in our society." Quite frankly, it doesn't shock me. People are ignorant because they choose to be. Even highly educated people keep themselves in a tightly wound community, never to venture out and see what is on the outside of their bubble. This is selective ignorance.

One of the most astounding things about being with a person when they first discover that I'm gay is the sheer stupidity of their comments when they are trying to be supportive and accepting. I've gotten, "I'm cool with that." OH! Thank God. I was so afraid of you not being cool with that. What a relief. By the way, I'm cool with you being straight, too. Then there's the people who try to tell you that a really good friend of theirs is gay or someone they work with or worked with is gay, "Maybe you know him. His name is Tom. He lives in Hoboken." Yes, Tom from Hoboken. We go way back. Apparently every single gay person in the world knows every person who is gay in the world. I particularly like it when they try to set you up with the only other gay person they know thinking that just because two people are gay they'll automatically be attracted to each other. Classic.

Those are not shocking examples of ignorance; they're simply head shaking humorous ones. The shocking part, as previously mentioned, is what we are compared to and accused of. Ralph Zappa compared being homosexual to alcoholics and pedophiles. Heterosexuality is not a disease that can be managed or a violent, mental illness that causes adults to prey on the innocent. To place emotionally healthy homosexuals in the same categories as a disease and mental illness is beyond ignorance. It's sheer stupidity.

Jackson also commented on my column last month. He wrote, "Maybe you outta (Jackson's word not mine) talk to the gay community and tell them to tone it down." He mentions gay pride parades and gay bars and the level of sexuality displayed at these venues. I'm wondering



what Jackson knows about these places and what he's not telling his friends and family. Seriously, calling the gay community out on how a small number of them act in a parade or in a bar is like saying Americans are loud, obnoxious, gaudy show boaters after watching a Macy's parade or saying that all single heterosexuals are over sexed perverts because of how they act in a straight bar every weekend. Come on Jackson. He (She? Can't tell) also said that, "Heterosexuals don't go around announcing what they are all the time." Really? Have you been to a wedding? Why do straight women have to be given doorknob-sized diamonds as an engagement ring? They want to announce, "HEY! I'M STRAIGHT AND GETTING MARRIED." Heterosexuals have pictures of their spouses and/or children at their places of work. They put silly little stick figure stickers of their family on the back of their mini-van and if driving a mini-van doesn't announce with a bullhorn that there are heterosexuals inside, I don't know what does.

I have no problem with heterosexuals. My parents were two of the best I've ever known. Even if I did have a problem with heterosexuality I wouldn't compare them to a disease, mental or physical, I wouldn't tell them to shut up about their lifestyle and stop shoving it in my face and I wouldn't reduce them to their reproductive sexual acts. And if you think this is what this column did, then you missed the point.

It comes down to basic human decency. Like Melissa said, "We are all human beings. Focusing on one's sexual orientation takes the focus from the things that are really important."



Dani Langevin is a teacher and has a Bachelors in Fine Art and Masters in Education. She has written four young adult novels, one of which is self-published. You can email Dani at Dani-BLangevin@aol.com

CULTURE WARRIOR

What is Love?

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

February is St. Valentine's month. In the middle of the winter when many spirits are down due to mid-winter cold and darkness, February 14th reminds us of the warmth of love. But what is love?

Love a word that is overused and abused in our culture. This has led to mass confusion and broken hearts and lives. There are two core underlying factors to this mis-use. The first problem is that love means many things in English: You can love your wife, your dog, your car, chocolate, oak trees, the color red, or your favorite shoes.

One word encompasses all this. The second problem is that we live in an era of subjectivism when love can mean whatever we want it to mean. One can practice almost any behavior and call it love; and in a society that exclusively equates love with subjective feelings we can even redefine the institution of marriage, which is supposedly grounded in love. In order to rediscover an accurate understanding of love, these two factors must be explored: the different kinds of love, and whether love has objective meaning and expression.

To begin, we go back to the origin of the word itself. In ancient Greek there were three words for love: philia, eros, and agape. Philia is a friendship-love. Eros is of attraction-love, a need-love born out of desire. Agape goes further than each of these: It refers to a selfless sacrificial love. Agape, therefore, is not a movement of the passions, such as in eros, but a choice of the will, to will the good for another. Agape commits to the other regardless of how unpleasant it may be at times. While eros says "I love you because of..." , agape says "I love you in spite of..." Eros primarily focuses on what you can get and agape on what you can give.

Overtime, eros seems to have become dominate in our culture. Yet, isn't it curious that St. Valentine's Day, named after a 4th century martyr of the Church, is now associated with the emotional dimension of eros – what our culture calls "being in love". But, as alluded to above, this kind of love is incomplete. Eros without agape treats the desired one as an object rather than a person. It focuses squarely on the self rather than the other. It is what today's "relationships" are based on, and why so many people are choosing not to marry. A relationship based on eros without agape becomes pure selfishness leading to the real possibility that if a more attractive or desirable alternative comes along, it would be time to change one's object of desire. Delving further beneath the surface on this topic, there are two other words in Greek that have an English equivalent, storge and pornea. Storge is an affection kind of love, and pornea represents sexual

sin and the disordered desire of lust.

To recap, philia and eros are to a certain degree conditional. If a friend (philia) deliberately and unrepentantly brings you serious harm, he or she may not remain your friend. If someone you are "head-over-heels in love" with (eros) reveals their dark side, becomes big, bald, or boring, eros may quickly dissipate. On the other hand agape, which is the choice to will the good of another remains "for better or for worse". For this reason, and because it is an act of our higher spiritual nature rather than of physiological passion, agape is the essence of love. It is truly personal and mutually good. Passion is passive, love is active. Passion responds, agape chooses. Passion points to satisfaction of self, love to the good of another. Physical attraction and emotional desire are good as stepping stones to agape, but if they are ends in themselves it is transformed into selfishness. Eventually eros either transcends into agape or descends into pornea. On the other hand, if attraction and desire are a means to a total and permanent commitment, they then serve as proper pleasurable benefits of love.

The second consideration regarding the nature of love relates to objective meaning and expression. Can someone harm another and properly call it love? What if he has all the emotional and passionate feelings of eros? Can unnatural acts be morally justified, as many claim today, if attraction and tenderness are present? Objectively and experientially, one can discover that feelings and desires can be easily disordered. Although disordered eros is a cross that can be very challenging for some, acting on such desires can never be condoned. For example, the subjective eros that some may have relating to incest, infidelity, pedophilia, bestiality, autoeroticism, and homosexuality, if acted upon, would violate the objective criteria of love. They never can be properly called love. Acts that violate human nature are dehumanizing, always wrong, and can never agape despite a sincere but disordered eros.

St. Valentine is said to be a 3rd century Christian martyr who died in a Roman prison upholding the truth about love. Let us celebrate Valentine's Day with humility and will the objective good for others. Until we uphold love and condemn all its counterfeits we do not love as St. Valentine did and we dishonor the true meaning of Valentine's Day.



Paul Murano teaches philosophy at Middlesex and North Shore Community College and theology at Magdalen College. He is host of Beneath the Surface on WCAP radio 980AM Sunday nights 10pm-midnight, and is co-host of the Paying Attention! radio program. Paul is also chairman of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help center in Burlington and is a singer/songwriter/musician.

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homes. Urban Elements in Newburyport has an amazing outlook on home, décor, and everyday design whether for your living space or a gift for someone else. "I'm happy, my employees are happy, and my customers are happy - life really is good!"

They also have a huge website that offers many more choices and designs, all together Urban Elements is truly an elemental pleasure for your decorative and gift designs it has been a pleasure to see Urban Elements grown into an amazing outlet here in Newburyport.

In March 2014, Urban Elements in Newburyport will open in their new larger location at 19 Water Street. "We couldn't be more excited to be able to spread out a little, and be able to show more of our collection." Urban Elements 20 Pleasant Street & 75 Merrimac Street Newburyport, MA 01950. www.UrbanElementsHome.com



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IN YOUR CORNER ... WITH SEN. KATIE IVES

A Response to Court Rulings on Sentencing Juveniles Convicted of 1st Degree Murder

Senator Katy O'Connor Ives
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Senators Barry Finegold, (D-Andover), Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester), Richard Moore (D-Uxbridge), Eileen Donoghue (D-Lowell), James Timilty (D-Walpole), Joan Lovely (D-Salem), Richard Ross (R-Wrentham), and Don Humason (R-Westfield), recently filed legislation to require juveniles convicted of first-degree murder to serve a minimum of 35 years before becoming eligible for parole.

I co-sponsored this legislation because this bill is an important legislative response to recent court rulings that will significantly impact the criminal justice system in Massachusetts. The legislative measure comes on the heels of a 2012 United States Supreme Court decision. *Miller v. Alabama* stated it is cruel and unusual punishment and therefor a violation of the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution for states to require juveniles who commit the crime of murder to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. In response to that Supreme Court Decision, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in December of 2013 that all juveniles convicted of first-degree murder cannot receive life sentences without parole because such sentences for juveniles conflict with the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights. Under these rulings, Massachusetts' judicial system will no longer be able to utilize discretion in issuing life-without-parole sentences for juvenile offenders on a case-by-case basis based on the circumstances. Life-without-parole for juveniles who are convicted of first-degree murder is now off the table, no matter the mental state or degree of violence used in perpetrating murder. This direction is counter to previously enacted state laws allowing for juveniles 14 and older to be tried as adults because of the serious nature of the crimes.

In Massachusetts, an adult offender is anyone who has attained the age of 18 at the time of the murder. If convicted of first-degree murder, these adults may receive life imprisonment without parole. But, with the new rulings, those convicted of first-degree murder 17 or younger will now get parole eligibility after serving 15 years. Confusingly, that is the same standard for adults convicted of second-degree murder. This new standard will now mean that families of murder victims in cases where the offender was under the age of 18, needs to

appear before a parole board to provide testimony and relive the painful details of their loved ones' death every five years after the convicted individual has served fifteen years.

It is important to note that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court did state that the Legislature has the opportunity to determine the sentencing standards for juveniles convicted of first-degree murder, stating, "We leave to the sound discretion of the Legislature the specific contours of a new sentencing scheme for juveniles convicted of homicide crimes, including the length of any mandatory prison term or the minimum and maximum term of any discretionary sentencing or parole-eligibility ranges. We emphasize, however, that a constitutional sentencing scheme for juvenile homicide defendants must take account of the spirit of our holdings ... and avoid imposing on juvenile defendants any term so lengthy that it could be seen as the functional equivalent of a life-without-parole sentence." This aspect of the ruling is one factor for why the sentencing minimum of 35 years was set in the new bill. A longer minimum sentence would push up against the cruel and unusual punishment standard articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court.

It is important for the Legislature to act on the opportunity detailed in the court's decision. The Massachusetts District Attorneys Association asked the Legislature to file a bill specifically requiring juveniles who are tried as adults, convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison to serve a minimum of 35 years before parole eligibility. State legislatures across the country are responding to similar state court rulings by instating minimum jail terms for juveniles before being eligible for parole.

Presently, 63 juveniles are in the Massachusetts prison system serving life sentences without parole. These cases will now have to go to the Parole Board for review.

In instances where perpetrators were juveniles, victims' families will never have closure because parole for juveniles will always be a factor. However, this new bill asserts that there should at least be a minimum amount of time served for a first-degree murder conviction and begins an important policy discussion on what should be the minimum prison sentence for juveniles convicted of first-degree murder before parole is a possibility. We must ensure that there is justice for murder victims and their families and that sentencing standards are not so skewed that an offender who murders at 18 can be sentenced to life without the possibility of parole and an individual who commits murder at 17 is eligible for parole after serving only fifteen years of their sentence.



State Senator Ives is a Democrat from Newburyport and represents 1st Essex District, which encompasses Amesbury, Haverhill, Merrimac, Newburyport, Methuen, Salisbury, and portions of North Andover.[1] Before her election to the Massachusetts Senate in 2012, O'Connor Ives was a member of the Newburyport City Council.

Pardon Me, Is that Che Guevara on your T-shirt?

Christine Morabito
PRESIDENT, GREATER BOSTON TEA PARTY

I'm not judging you. I'm sure you would never knowingly celebrate a violent, bloodthirsty hit-man for the brutal communist dictator, Fidel Castro.

What we should have learned from Hitler, Stalin, Mao and their ilk, is that tyrants are good at marketing. In order to sell their snake oil, it must be wrapped in a pretty package. They control the media, and hence the message. And, while most of us are skeptical consumers when it comes to our despots, there are obnoxious blowhards like Michael Moore assuring us that Cuba has better healthcare than America, because - get this - he went there and the Cuban government showed him (wink, wink).

When a lie is repeated often enough people start to believe it. Maybe that is why Ernesto "Che" Guevara has enjoyed such a cult following around the world. Somewhere between the bloviations of liberal apologists and the failure of our public schools, you probably never learned the following about your hero, El Che:

Guevara the Sadist
Cuban-American Vietnam veteran and Former CIA operative, Felix Rodriguez, who ultimately helped capture Guevara, told Newsmax: "I believe that eventually people will see what he really was. He was an assassin." Rodriguez continued, "He was an individual with very little regard for life. He enjoyed killing people."

In Che's own words: A revolutionary must become a cold killing machine motivated by pure hate." Another fan favorite: "Crazy with fury I will stain my rifle red while slaughtering any enemy that falls in my hands! My nostrils dilate while savoring the acrid odor of gunpowder and blood. With the deaths of my enemies I prepare my being for the sacred fight and join the triumphant proletariat with a bestial howl!"

There are accounts of Che shooting pregnant women in the stomach, simply because their families opposed him. Other than that, I'm sure he was a nice guy.

Guevara the Assassin
He was fascinated by violence. Castro's hatchet man ordered thousands of executions (no trial necessary) which earned him the nickname "Butcher of La Cabaña." In his own words: "To send men to the firing squad, judicial proof is unnecessary ... These procedures are an archaic bourgeois detail. This is a revolution!"

Yet, actor Johnny Depp wears a pen-



dant of the sociopath around his neck.

Guevara the Tyrant
This hygienically challenged "freedom fighter" hated free speech, freedom of the press and freedom of religion. He ordered books burned and signed death warrants for authors who dared to disagree with him. According to Cuban jazz legend, Paquito D'Rivera, "Che hated artists, so how is it possible that artists still today support the image of Che Guevara?" Cuban songwriter Silvio Rodriguez, remembers, "We had to follow orders apparently given by a commission of the Central Committee of the Party whose job it was to approve songs, poems, and anything that had to do with Che Guevara."

Still, artists like Madonna and Carlos Santana think he's just swell.

Guevara the Racist
In Che's own words: "The black is indolent and a dreamer; spending his meager wage on frivolity or drink." Also from his diary: "The blacks, those magnificent examples of the African race who have maintained their racial purity thanks to their lack of an affinity with bathing, have seen their territory invaded by a new kind of slave: the Portuguese." So, why does Jay Z parade around in his Guevara tee? Jessie Jackson has called Che, "the most honest, courageous politician I have ever met." Even Mike Tyson sports a tattoo of his alleged champion.

Guevara the Terrorist
El Che had a deep-seated hatred for the free people of the United States and their allies. In his own words: "If the nuclear missiles had remained (in Cuba) we would have fired them against the heart of the U.S. including New York City. The victory of socialism is well worth millions of atomic victims!" and "Against those hyenas [Americans] there is no option but extermination!"

Angelina Jolie should consider having that tattoo removed. We have the technology.

The Castro regime conspired with communists in Russia and around the world. They collectivized farms and confiscated businesses. Cuba imprisoned homosexuals and committed scores of human rights violations. In Che Guevara's Cuba there were no free elections.

So please throw that t-shirt in the trash heap where it belongs. If you want to make a fashion statement, surely there's a better way.



Christine Morabito is a resident of Haverhill and former President of the Greater Boston Tea Party. You can email her at christine.morabito@hotmail.com

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Sexual Harassment, Discrimination

Attorney Timothy F. Stark, Esq.
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Many people don't realize that sexual harassment is actually a form of sex discrimination. The statute that makes sexual harassment unlawful in Massachusetts is M.G.L. c. 151B. Although there are also federal statutes that prohibit sexual harassment, it is often better for an employee to file the action using the Massachusetts law, assuming that the cause of action occurred in Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination is the agency that enforces the statute, and it is located at 1 Ashburton Place in downtown Boston. Although it may be advisable to utilize the services of an experienced employment attorney in pursuing a claim, the Commission does not require that you do. The agency is actually in the executive branch of the government, i.e. the Governor appoints the Commissioners and is responsible for the agency's management. Therefore, because it is not a part of the judicial branch of government, the rules of evidence don't strictly apply. This can sometimes allow the "story" to be more easily presented.

The statute defines two specific forms of sexual harassment: "quid pro quo" harassment, where the request for sexual favors or acquiescence in sexual advances becomes necessary in order to maintain the person's job, or as a requirement for promotions; and "hostile environment" sexual harassment, which is defined as an environment which "unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment." I often describe this second type as conduct of a sexual nature that is hostile and does not allow an employee to fully participate in the workplace. The statute of limitations on these claims is 300 days from the date of the actions, but this issue is often more complicated than just counting the days on a calendar. It is wise for an employee to check with the Commission, or an attorney, prior to making any definite decisions.

Over the years, I have had a number of cases where the defendant employer has



claimed that they were unaware of the conduct and, therefore, cannot be responsible for the behavior. In Massachusetts this is not a defense, assuming that the conduct in question is from a supervisor or someone acting in a supervisory capacity. This is not necessarily the case in either Federal Court or in some other states, and is one of the reasons that the Massachusetts Commission is a preferable forum for employees.

Cases of sexual harassment are often very delicate and difficult for both the employer and the employee, and they can get very emotional. They are usually "fact-driven" cases and often revolve around the credibility of the parties and/or witnesses. The judgments in these cases are varied with some cases resulting in complete acquittals for the employers or in judgments for the employee. The judgments for the employee can range from nominal damages to thousands of dollars, or even in rare cases to seven figures. If you are an employer who has been accused of sexual harassment, or an employee who has been the victim of harassment, it is a good idea to at least talk with an experienced employment attorney prior to taking any action. Remember, the only person who has legal rights is the person who knows what those legal rights are.

Attorney Timothy F. Stark, Esq. has over 25 years of legal experience in Employment Law, Divorce Law, and Divorce Mediation, with backgrounds in both Human Resource Management and Psychology. Please feel free to contact him by calling (978) 685-8777 or e-mailing him at info@timfstark.com. His law office is located at 805 Turnpike Street, Suite 101, North Andover, MA 01845.

Haverhill High Graduation Rate is Highest in Eight Years at 75.3%

Superintendent James F. Scully announced today that the four-year graduation rate of Haverhill High School has increased to the highest rate it has been since the state began calculating graduation rates in 2006. In 2013, Haverhill High School graduated more than 75.3% of the students that entered as ninth graders in 2009-2010. This is an increase of 4.2% from the 2012 graduation rate of 71.1%. The four-year graduation rate reflects the percentage of an incoming freshmen class that graduates in the traditional four years. This cohort of students was monitored for the past four years. The final figure includes both students who left the district and entered the district within this cohort.

Equally important to this increase in the graduation rate is the decline in Haverhill High School's dropout rate. The number of students who dropped out of Haverhill High School declined from 5.6% in 2012, to 4.7% in 2013. This reflects a decline of .9%; the lowest dropout rate the school has had in the past decade.

The Patrick Administration and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education published a press release on January 27, 2014, stating: "Four-year Graduation Rate Improves for 7th Consecutive Year; Strong Improvements seen for students in Urban District and Hispanic Students; Annual Dropout Rate Falls for 5th Straight Year." Superintendent Scully is pleased that Haverhill shares in the upward trend. Haverhill High School made gains across many categories, and is up 6.5% from the first reported graduation rate of 68.8% in 2006. Through the hard work and dedication of school leaders and educators, more students are graduating on time and fewer students are dropping out.

Haverhill High School has seen tremendous gains in the four-year graduation rate of English Language Learners (ELL). ELL students had the highest gain in the school with 65% of the subgroup graduating in 2013 compared to 41.5% in 2012. This gain of 23.5% placed the Haverhill High School ELL population above the state. The four-year graduation rate of ELL students across the state was 63.5% in 2013, 1.5% lower than Haverhill High School. Similarly, the Asian subgroup at Haverhill High School surpassed the state's Asian subgroup. In 2013, Haverhill graduated 92.3% of Asian students within four years and the state graduated 90.6% of Asian students within the traditional timeframe.

Haverhill High School has also seen positive momentum in Hispanic, Low-Income, and African American subgroups. Approximately, 64.3% of Hispanic students graduated in 2013 compared to 45.5% in 2012. This was an increase of 19% from the previous year. Low-income students saw a gain of 11%, moving from 53% in 2012 to 64.3% in 2013. This subgroup was followed by African Americans



who had a gain of 7.6% from 63.2% in 2012 to 70.8% in 2013.

The Superintendent of Schools, along with district administration commend the work of numerous grant-funded programs that have supported students who might have dropped out due to economic, academic, or family issues, and inspired them to graduate on time. Interim Principal Beth Kitsos has identified the implementation of night school, credit recovery through computer based learning, and the YES program as contributing to the positive gains experienced at Haverhill High School. Each program targets a specific group of students who have unique situations, yet aspire to graduate with a high school diploma. These grant-funded programs give students who would not have the chance of graduating, the opportunity to achieve a high school degree through personalized learning environments and increased connections with educators and guidance staff.

Likewise, the development and implementation of the Freshmen Academy has contributed to the positive gains experienced at Haverhill High School. Historically, freshmen and sophomore years have proved the most challenging for some students. The Freshmen Academy was developed to keep cohorts of students together with a team of teachers who focus on the individual needs of each student through the development of personalized learning activities, increased parent outreach, and collaboration of teacher teams, guidance, and support staff.

Haverhill High School strives to provide all students with a rigorous academic curriculum that aligns with 21st century learning expectations. This focus has resulted in an increase in student achievement at the high school and has greatly contributed to the successes experienced by the increasing number of Haverhill High School graduates.

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Martha Coakley - Against Sunshine and For Hiding Public Malfeasance

Dr. Bharani Padmanabhan
VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

Attorney General Martha Coakley made a lot of noise prior to her last election about public entities not being allowed to force nondisclosure agreements onto whistleblowers and other employees. Turns out it was just that, noise. In a very important report this week, the Globe revealed that it had to fight Martha Coakley in court for 4 long years to get public records that by law were always public, especially as they concerned the taxpayers' money. Then again, when has Martha Coakley ever respected the taxpayer?

In my previous columns here in The Valley Patriot, I have given instance after instance where Martha Coakley sided with the corrupt and the criminal against the little people whom state government supposedly exists to protect.

Martha Coakley ignored a written criminal complaint filed by me against then Director of MassHealth, Dr. Julian Harris, in an egregious case of public corruption and abuse of office. Martha Coakley did not care. The poor parents of young Justina Pelletier begged Martha Coakley to help rescue their child from Children's Hospital's locked psych-ward, a situation that allowed Children's to ding the taxpayer \$2000 a day for 11 months with ZERO improvement in the child's health. Martha Coakley met their pleas with deaf ears.

In the hidden cases revealed by the Globe after fighting Martha Coakley tooth and nail, it is no surprise at all that the maximum amount of secret settlements [\$1.6 MILLION] involves the institutionally corrupt Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the same cesspool that knowingly let Annie Dookhan send hundreds to prison on fake data, that then let murderers out on the street, that allowed 64 people to be killed by fungal meningitis, that knew openly and did not care that Jeremiah Oliver's social worker had not visited him since April 2013, that illegally sided with Children's Hospital against the parents of Justina Pelletier and consciously violated their human rights by hiding reports from the Judge, that officially aided Cambridge Hospital in attempting to intimidate a witness to criminal fraud. Yes, that same EOHHS, the definition of a state predator.

It is further no surprise at all that Martha Coakley was hand in glove with Governor Deval Patrick in trying to hide all this from the taxpayer. Readers of the VP may remember my reporting what I was told by Deval Patrick's aide Matt, in Deval Patrick's office at the State House on the 25th of February, 2013 - "Ensuring Good Governance is not the obligation of the Governor's Office."

The Globe quoted a lawyer who said "We expect [government employers] to follow the rules. And when the rules haven't been followed they should correct them. It seems to me that should be part of good government." Deval Patrick and Martha Coakley strenuously disagree.

It is heartening to read that Martha Coakley lost this court case here to the Globe.

It is however equally likely that Martha Coakley has also lost the case at the Supreme Court involving the 35-foot buffer zone outside women's health clinics. The judges of the present Roberts court made it plain her arguments were weak and likely to fail.

Knowing Martha Coakley nothing better



may be expected.

Given that Martha Coakley's basic grammar itself is shaky, it was too much to depend on her to win an argument at the Supreme Court - "With no due respect, I haven't heard a good response," Coakley said." [State House News Service - Matt Murphy - Jan 23rd, 2014]

"No due respect"? Really? Really?

It is the utter misfortune of women nationwide that they were represented in this case by Martha Coakley.

Women nationwide would be well served to also loudly question the wisdom of Emily's List already throwing it's full support behind Martha Coakley when there is another woman by the name of Juliette Kayyem running for the same office, a woman who surely is no less competent than Martha Coakley herself plus carries nary a whiff of being corruption's active handmaiden.

Then again the fact that Martha Coakley is partial to big wigs may have had a lot to do with Emily's List deciding to support her all the way, one full year before the election.

All kingmakers prefer a controllable, compromised candidate who will be dependent on them to be deemed one of what Ben Hecht memorably termed "The Respectables." To be considered one of "The Respectables" is enough for some to go along with anything, including fighting a newspaper for 4 long years over the release of public data involving public money paid to public employees who themselves overwhelmingly supported the release of said public data. And why fight it? To hide the corrupt and their malfeasance from sunshine! That is what Martha Coakley has been doing as Attorney General!

Which likely explains Emily's List's description of Martha Coakley's performance as Attorney General, a perfect example of an unsupportable assertion - "Martha, a second-term Attorney General, is leading the field in the race for governor by double digits because, quite simply, she is really good at her job."

Massachusetts taxpayers! Behold what Emily's List considers being 'really good at her job'! Women would be better served by voting for any woman candidate who has been actively ignored by Emily's List.

And if as expected the Supreme Court rules against Martha Coakley in the buffer zone case due to her own oft-demonstrated incompetence, she may well be fêted by the anti-abortion camp for handing women's health clinics back to them just as she handed Ted Kennedy's old Senate seat to the Republicans.

At that point Martha Coakley can always pull a Reagan and join the Republican Party.

TEEN TALK WITH ANA DEBERNARDO

Marching for LIFE in Washington DC

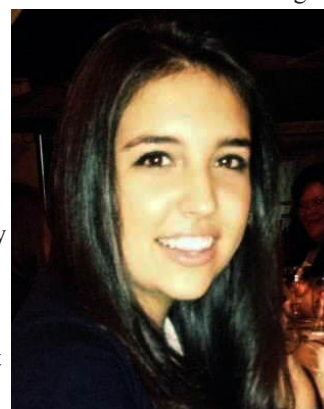
I've just returned home after spending four days in Washington, D.C., at the March for Life. About 80 kids from my school, and a dozen chaperones, take two buses every year. This year was my second consecutive year attending (as I am a sophomore). Both years, I was inspired to see how many people come together to fight for the common cause of defending life. Not only was there a record-breaking count this year of over 700,000 people, but the quantity of states AND countries represented was beyond belief.

Our trip began on Monday night with a Mass at our school before boarding our buses for the 10 hour drive ahead of us. Tuesday morning, we arrived in D.C. with plans to visit famous landmarks and explore the city. Our first stop was the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. We were divided into small groups led by one of our teachers, and began touring the Shrine. After spending one hour admiring the general splendor, we lost track of time and seemed to forget that we still had the whole day to walk around D.C. Mesmerized by the architectural and inspiring surroundings inside the Shrine, we didn't realize that it had begun to snow--heavily. Nevertheless, our group was too enthused to let the snow hold us back.

We skipped to the Metro in linked arms, singing songs and in overall high spirits. Next stop: the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. Another hour passed as we walked around the museum looking at all the exhibits, and once again, losing ourselves in the moment, we were ignorant of the fact that the snow had turned into a minor blizzard. Still, we refused to let this bother us and continued on with our sightseeing--this time, completely on foot. We saw the White House, the Vietnam and World War II memorials, and the Lincoln and Washington monuments. By the middle of the day, when I would normally be in my third class, we had trudged through 9 miles of snow in frigid weather. Although normally I would have been extremely bothered by these conditions (since I much prefer the warm weather), I realized that I was touring our nation's capital with all my friends and I was incandescent with happiness. People were passing around hand warmers and taking turns with gloves. Yet, out of this enormous group of teenagers, not one complained.

After we had ended our tourism portion of the trip, we traveled to Union Station to grab lunch and eventually re-boarded our buses. The last stop of the day was an AMAZING concert by an incredibly gifted Christian singer named Matt Maher. Thousands of teenagers filled the immense arena, hands pointed to heaven and voices lifted in praise. It was indescribable seeing all these young people coming together to worship in such a profound way. For me, it is sometimes hard to believe that there exist kids of my age who are as passionate

about these things as I am, and it was such a refreshing feeling to see them so engaged.



Following the concert, we boarded our buses for the last time, wrapping up our exhausting yet wonderful first day. No, we did not mess around all night and create mayhem upon arrival to the hotel--we were too tired. I, for one, had never fallen asleep faster in my life.

The third day of our pilgrimage began with an early 6 o'clock breakfast. Following our meal, we headed to a new church to hear Mass and then made our way to the rally. Our objective was to march up Capitol Hill toward our final destination: the Supreme Court building. Despite the misleading media portrayals of our rally, this march was a completely friendly and good-spirited protest. No one was shouting negative comments, but instead people were cheerfully chanting defense-of-life messages. There was no kind of violence initiated, nor were there any crazed marchers. On the contrary, I had never been surrounded by such amiable people. Many that I had never seen before approached us and started genuine conversations inquiring after our schools, whether or not it was our first time on the March, and even hugging us before heading their separate ways. It got me wondering what the world would be like had all of its prior inhabitants been as neighborly and bona fide in their treatment of one another. At the conclusion of the march, we went to yet another church for some sharing of thoughts on the day and private reflection time.

One of the speeches given there particularly hit home for me. The speaker said that the reason we march is not only to defend the unborn babies who don't have the ability to defend their own lives, but also to defend general human dignity. An elite member of society, and a homeless man on the street, are totally equal, in that they share in the GIFT of life. Every person in the world, no matter how rich or how poor, or how high or low his social class, share in this gift. And not one person can take this right to life away from another. We march because everyone has an innate right to live and deserves the opportunities that come connaturally with life.

Our pilgrimage was winding down as the next day approached. Thursday morning came and our trip was nearly over. We had our final breakfast at the hotel, packed our bags, heard one final Mass, and just like that, we were headed home.

Of all the experiences of my life, I can honestly say the March for Life has been the most rewarding, both spiritually and emotionally. I strongly encourage people of all ages to consider making this trip in the future because not only will you have a great time, but it could potentially change your life in more ways than one.

You can email Ana at: pm.de@verizon.net or Attention: ANA to valleypatriot@aol.com

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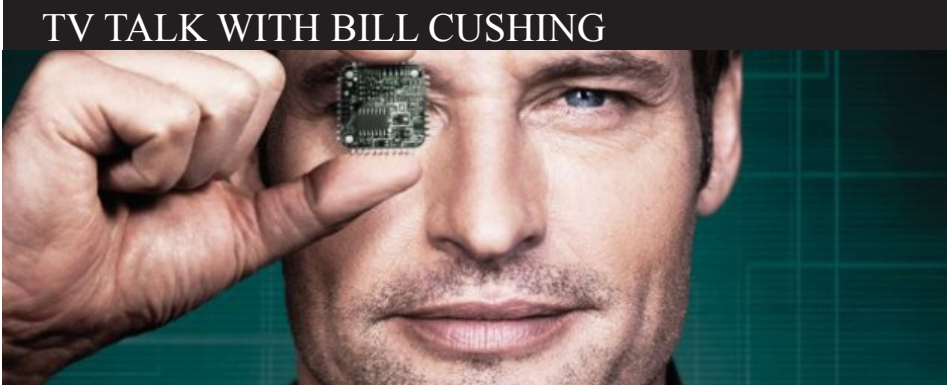
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TV TALK WITH BILL CUSHING

CBS “Intelligence”: Been There Done That

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST



CBS new series ‘Intelligence’, starring LOST’s Josh Holloway and CSI’s Marg Helgenberger, premiered on January 7th to decent ratings. It boasted a good cast, and an interesting premise.

The drama centers on a high tech intelligence operative named Gabriel, played by Holloway, who has a super computer microchip implanted into his brain, and the director of the cyber security agency named Lillian Strand that he works for, played by Helgenberger.

The show is pretty much your standard procedural. Show the crime, solve the crime, and catch the bad guys. The problem is that this premise has been done before, and better. NBC had a series called Chuck, which ran from 2007-2012.

It was the story of a computer geek who accidentally downloads critical government secrets into his brain, essentially making his mind a super computer. Sound familiar?

The difference was that Chuck was a nerd and this thing in his brain made him a spy, and that made it interesting. Gabriel is already a competent spy, much less interesting.

Granted, ‘Intelligence’ takes a more serious approach, while ‘Chuck’ was much more light hearted.

But Chuck was much better acted and written. ‘Chuck’ built a cult-like following over its 5 years on the air and stood out from other shows. ‘Intelligence,’ however, is loaded with your standard clichés and lazy writing, and does nothing to separate itself from other shows of its kind. There’s just nothing special to it.

In the pilot, Strand decides that Gabriel needs a bodyguard, so she hires an attractive young brunette from the Secret Service

to watch over him. Let the sexual tension begin.

Cliché #1. Midway through the episode, we find that Gabriel’s co-worker and friend is actually working for the other side. The Mole.

Cliché #2. Throw in a fight with a guy twice his size, an unlikely hero saving the day, and mysterious issues surrounding his missing wife and her possibly being a traitor, and you have 3 more clichés that Gabriel has to deal with in the first hour.

It was really good to see Holloway on TV again, but he is wasted in this series. I’ve never been a big fan of Helgenberger and watching her in this series reminded me why. I just never find her believable in her roles. She’s very wooden and dull in this role although, let’s face it, she doesn’t have much to work with.

There are some good action sequences that will attract fans, Holloway is very likable in his role, and the show may get better as it goes along. Ratings have plummeted since the pilot episode, however, this is the type of series that CBS normally turns into a hit, so we will have to see where it goes in the coming weeks.

If you like “Intelligence,” get your fill of it while you can. My guess is that it will be unlikely to see a 2nd season.

With so many choices on TV these days, shows really have to do something to stand out, and ‘Intelligence’ fails to do so. In fact, it is so unoriginal and boring, that is just blends in with today’s TV landscape and gets lost in the shuffle. Hopefully Josh Holloway gets a better vehicle to come back to TV in, once this show is put out of its misery.

Do you have any questions about TV? Email me at BillsTVPatTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future column.

*For daily TV news, follow Bill on Twitter @TVNewsandNotes and on Facebook at TVNewsandNotes
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LET’S TALK ABOUT FOOD ... ADDICTION

Pennie Hale
VALLEY PATRIOT FOOD COLUMNIST

Have you ever taken a food addiction quiz? Are you concerned enough about your eating habits and/or weight that you spent time searching for information regarding eating disorders, food or carb addiction and weight loss? Have you wondered why you struggle with your weight or why obesity is common in your family? Are you worried that you will be overweight your whole life? Have you lost weight then gained it all back? Do you ask your doctor to prescribe the latest weight-loss pill? Are you one of the people that spends money every week on weight-loss shakes, powders, pills or plans?

I could answer yes to nearly every one of those questions. I am weight obsessed. I think about calories, food and weight every single day. Even when I achieved a 75-pound weight loss, I was not happy with my weight. I’ve gained a lot of it back which astonishes me. I worked so hard to lose weight. I felt great at my goal weight. Having more energy was fantastic. Clothes fit better. But it didn’t last. I couldn’t maintain that weight. Cravings and addictions that I ignored for a year resurfaced and were more powerful than ever.

I have seen friends undergo gastric bypass surgery. Friends have shared their stories of weight loss and gain. People have sent me emails in response to my column. They’ve offered advice and compassion. Everyone has a weight story. In my life, weight is a topic of conversation nearly every day. Why is it such an issue? Why are so many people concerned about their weight? Why do we obsess over it? Why do we keep trying to lose weight even if we fail?

I think we all have an ideal weight.

I’m not referring to weight charts. I’m referring to that weight at which we feel happy. There’s a weight at which we feel our best. We’ve probably all discovered that number we don’t want to go above. We know that when we go above a certain weight, we feel less comfortable, less attractive, and certainly less healthy. Why is that weight so difficult for some of us to maintain? Why are some motivated every day to exercise when some of us procrastinate?

I recently read an article on CNN Health. The first paragraph reads “The baby fat lingering around your 5-year-old’s face (and tummy and thighs) may be an indicator of his or her weight for many years to come, a new study suggests. Children who enter kindergarten overweight are four times more likely than their normal weight peers to become obese by age 14, researchers say.” Is weight predetermined? Are we fighting a losing battle as teens, young adults and adults?

I keep researching the topic of weight loss. I want to understand as much as I can about addiction. I took the food addiction quiz. Based on the results from that specific website, I am NOT a food addict. Its a good thing I don’t believe everything I read. I know what my issues are and how they originated. I know I can’t learn everything from online research. A doctor’s advice is invaluable. Perhaps a nutritionist could offer some insight. I know that short-term weight-loss trends and techniques are not the answer to healthy weight maintenance.

What is your weight-related story? Do you spend a significant amount of time thinking about weight? Is that unusual or is it normal for everyone? I’d like to know how you are doing with your own personal weight maintenance. Please share your story with me. Send an email to pennielacouture@verizon.net

THE EMPTY CHAIR SHOW

The Stigma of Addiction

Phil Lahey
VALLEY PATRIOT ADDICTION COLUMNIST

Everyone knows that addicts are low life people who deserve what they get for choosing a life of addiction. Hell, I felt the same way right up until the time I found out my daughter was a heroin addict. My first thoughts were what would people think? How can I make her better? That my friends, was the beginning of a long and painful education into the world of addiction.

For the first couple of years I did not know what to do or who to talk to. My knowledge of fighting addiction consisted of Nancy Reagan telling everyone to “Just say no.”

I was one of the lucky ones because my daughter is not only still alive, but has been in recovery for the last 5 years. Together, we do a TV show on M.C.T.V, and also seen on YouTube called theemptychairshow.

If you have not seen any episodes I ask you to at least watch the episode titled “A Mothers Worst Nightmare.” Our guest is Betsy Cote who lost her son to addiction less than a year ago. Betsy is a very courageous woman whose only motive for doing the show was to convince people that it can happen no matter where you live and how you were brought up. It is her hope that by sharing her story, she may prevent other families from going through the heartache that she and her family has suffered.

I would like to tell you about one

other guest we recently had on our show. Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon told the story of a family member who also died of an overdose. So why would Chief Solomon, Betsy and so many other guests reveal their personal experiences to the public? Simple, they are trying to make people aware and hopefully help others realize there is no need for shame, embarrassment and guilt. It is their hope that people will step out of the shadows and reach out for help.

Recently we’ve organized a task force that was spearheaded by Representative Dianna DiZoglio. It is my hope that this task force will have a two pronged attack. One being on the State level where Rep. DiZoglio will file legislation with the input of the task force. The other would be to attack this on the Community level. Those on our task force welcome you in the Greater Lawrence area and beyond to join us in our fight to erase the stigma of addiction. I call out to all our local politicians, parents, people who work in recovery, people in recovery and anyone who would like to be involved.

If you are interested in joining our army or if you have any questions, please call me at 978-557-9235 and ask for Phil. My website is www.methuenhope.com or I can be reached on my Facebook page called The Empty Chair. I look forward to hearing from you!

Till next time.

Phil Lahey is a former Methuen City Councilor. You can reach him at lahey2000@verizon.net,

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How can we TEST to see if I have a GLUTEN sensitivity or GLUTEN related health issues?

What if your path to a better quality life is avoiding food that is killing you and your family?

Dr. Jin Sung
CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

Gluten is one of the biggest culprits in causing chronic health issues such as fibromyalgia, thyroid issues, chronic fatigue, and Irritable Bowel that I see in my office. Therefore, it is EXTREMELY important to be tested properly for gluten sensitivity. People who have chronic health issues may have already been tested for gluten and the results may have come back negative; the problem is that most methods of testing for gluten traditionally done from saliva or stool may only test for alpha gliadin and 1 isomer of transglutaminase, but many people can react to any of the 10 other particles of the breakdown of gluten, including wheat germ agglutinin. In our office, we run a food sensitivity test from a lab called Cyrex Labs which tests all components of wheat and gluten as well as 24 other foods that may be cross-reactive.

Gluten isn't just a fad diet...Gluten is being recognized as a contributing factor to many of the chronic conditions we are being faced with as a society.

So what is gluten anyways? Gluten is the protein in wheat, barley, rye and oats. The reason that so many people across the country are gluten-sensitive is that we've been eating genetically-engineered wheat since the late 1940's. Our bodies were not made to eat genetically-engineered wheat. Our bodies were not made to eat chemicals and that's exactly what we are consuming! If you are sensitive to gluten, it will cause your immune system to attack your body, whether it's your thyroid, your joints, your pancreas, or elsewhere. This sensitivity leads to chronic gut inflammation and absorption issues of proper nutrients; and in time poor health.

It is estimated that just under 1% of the US population is sensitive to gluten due to celiac disease. Most people I work with in my office are under the misconception that only those diagnosed with celiac disease should steer clear of gluten. The reality is that over 90% of the patients I see with

chronic health issues are sensitive to gluten in some form and must make dietary changes in order to resolve their symptoms and change the quality of their life.

In order for you to be healthy, one of the best things that you can do is to avoid gluten at all costs. Also, people who are gluten sensitive are usually addicted to grains and will go through withdrawal symptoms when going gluten free, so be patient and give it a few weeks after making the switch to a gluten free diet. Your body will thank you.

Gluten Testing

Not all tests for Gluten are created equal. While most tests only test for the Alpha Gliadin protein and/or the Transglutaminase enzyme, wheat is much more complex. Our office uses multiple tests for Gluten sensitivity however Array #3 from Cyrex labs is the most thorough. Many people have been tested for Gluten by their doctor and it comes back they tested negative to the Alpha Gliadin and Transglutaminase enzyme, after testing a more complex panel like Array #3 many find that they truly have a Gluten sensitivity. Below is a breakdown of a true Gluten Sensitivity test.

Cyrex Labs: Wheat/Gluten Sensitivity: The Wheat Molecule & Its Components

The general term, gluten sensitivity, describes the fact that your body's immune system is producing cells called ANTIBODIES against one or several components of wheat grain! These antibodies are capable of finding and attacking wheat or any of wheat's constituents, and they all have different names, depending on the piece of the puzzle they are targeting.

You will notice that there are two types

of antibody for each category found on array # 3. IgG antibodies are found throughout the body and are responsible for finding and destroying invasive pathogens, or germs. IgA antibodies are found more specifically in the mucous lining various

surfaces of the body, especially the gut. Each component of the wheat molecule can have one, or both, types of antibodies attacking it at any given time.

1. Wheat Grain Antibodies: Wheat IgG

& IgA

These antibodies will attack the entire wheat grain itself. Having these antibodies means you are gluten sensitive and will have symptoms typically associated with gluten sensitivity such as irritable bowel syndrome, headaches, vertigo, joint pain, inflammation, and many more. Many chronic conditions such as auto-immunity are a direct result of leaky gut caused by gluten sensitivity!

2. Gluten Protein Antibodies: Alpha Gliadin 33 & 17 MER IgG & IgA, Gamma Gliadin 15 MER IgG & IgA, Omega Gliadin IgG & IgA, Glutenin IgG & IgA

The wheat grain is broken into two subsections. One of them is the gluten protein. The gluten protein itself is further broken down into two parts, gliadin and glutenin. Classically, only ONE antibody, Alpha Gliadin IgA, was tested for! This is why you may have been "tested" for gluten sensitivity in the past and told you were negative! Alpha, gamma, and omega gliadin refer to the different varieties of the gliadin molecule. The numbers, 33 & 17 MER, simply refer to how each molecule is arranged chemically. Glutenin is the other part of the gluten protein, and antibodies can be formed against it as

well.

3. Lectin Antibodies: Wheat Germ Agglutinin IgG & IgA

The other subsection to the wheat grain is the lectin. Lectins are highly destructive molecules that are capable of perforating holes in the cells lining our gut and causing leaky gut syndrome all on their own! Wheat germ agglutinin is the specific lectin found in wheat, especially sprouted or whole wheat and can cause clumping of red blood cells, causing symptoms like cold, painful extremities, joint deterioration, and inflammation. Lectins can be found in other foods as well, such as the nightshade plant family, legumes, dairy, and more.

4. Transglutaminase: Gliadin-Transglutaminase IgG & IgA, Transglutaminase IgG & IgA

Transglutaminase is the enzyme made in our bodies whose job is to digest gluten. It is possible for our bodies to be so confused that the immune system will make antibodies against our own enzymes. These four antibodies are highly associated with auto-immune disease and can be found in locations other than the gut, such as the liver and muscle.

5. Prodorphins: Prodorphin IgG & IgA

Prodorphins are the basic building blocks of chemicals called endorphins (the "feel good" molecules) and neurotransmitters (messengers between neurons in the brain). It is often the case in auto-immunity and gluten sensitivity that the body will make antibodies to these important molecules and cause a lack of neurotransmitters and endorphins in the brain. Lack of these important chemicals will cause symptoms like anxiety and depression, memory loss, and increased pain sensation. Long term lack of these chemicals can lead to drug addictions and neurological disorders.

6. Gluteomorphin: Gluteomorphin IgG & IgA

Gluteomorphins are opiod-like chemicals that are formed during digestion of the gliadin portion of the gluten protein. They are capable of binding to the same receptors in the brain that heroin binds to! This can cause an actual addiction to gluten. If positive for these antibodies, eliminating gluten from the diet may cause initial withdrawal-like symptoms that last 1-2 weeks.

7. Glutamic Acid Decarboxylase (GAD65): GAD65 IgG & IgA

Glutamic acid decarboxylase, or GAD65, for short, is a pre-cursor to an extremely important neurotransmitter in the brain called GABA. This neurotransmitter is "inhibitory," meaning that it "calms down" areas of the brain that cause excitability, anxiety, irritability, and restlessness. Having antibodies against GAD65 can cause these symptoms and may also lead to type I diabetes.

The question is should I be tested? My answer is if you have chronic health issues suspect certain foods to be and issue the your should be tested.

Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractic physician who helps his patients both neurologically and metabolically to solve complex health issues. He can be reached at 978 688-6999. Or visit his website at www.DrJinSung.com



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BABIES AND BRIEFCASES

THE MULTI-TASKING MAMA
FINDING A BALANCE

Cheryl Hajjar

VALLEY PATRIOT MOMMY COLUMNIST

So the other day while sitting at my kitchen island I found myself writing an email, having 2 conversations going via text, cooking dinner, and helping my son with his Math homework. Does that qualify for quintuple tasking? Is there such a word? I feel that that scenario goes way beyond multi-tasking and I deserve a gold star or something. As I realized what was happening, I sat back and laughed and then of course called my mother to tell her what was going on. When I told her of the 5-ring circus playing out at my house, she actually said that I give her anxiety by just telling her what goes on in my life on a daily basis.

For many of us, balancing career and family is an extremely difficult task. I welcome the days when I only have to take care of my son and drive him around to his activities. That feels like a vacation to me. The June Cleavers are a dying breed because in today's day and age most households need two incomes to survive. If you are like me, your thirst for being an entrepreneur and running your own business gets challenging. Having a demanding corporate job is just as hard. Being present, and coherent at business meetings, networking groups and corporate functions is a tough thing to manage. We always have our families on our mind. Who is where, who needs a ride to basketball, what are they going to eat for dinner if we are not home to cook for them. This is craziness! I am convinced this is why women live longer than men because our hearts are strengthened everyday by the amount of anxiety that is pumped through them.

If you are like me, you struggle to find balance. So as women, what can we do to try and find that happy place where both our career and families can meet? Here are a few suggestions.

Refuse To Feel Guilty- This will be difficult at best. Understand that when you are working on a project for work, or at a meeting, you are actually working towards either another sale or doing your job that could either lead to a promotion, or higher profit which everyone in your family benefits from.

Saying No To Your Children- Sound like a bad thing? It actually is not. It teaches



them that they cannot have everything they want just because they ask for it, and when they are able to go somewhere or buy something that it should be cherished. Just say no to raising a Vercia Salt. Your child will thank you later.

Take Care of your Adult Relationships- If Mama is not happy, nobody is happy. Spend time nurturing your marriage, relationship or close friends. When stressful times arise, you will need these people to help get you through.

Money Is Not God - Remember the character Ebenezer Scrooge from the classic movie A Christmas Carol? He worked on both Christmas Eve and Christmas and took no time to celebrate with family and friends because he had none. I don't know about you, but I don't want scary ghosts visiting me at night and I like having fun times with my family and friends. So keep money in perspective. Although it is a necessary evil, it doesn't have to be in the forefront of your every waking thought.

Reward yourself- Take time out to spoil yourself. Get those monthly manicures, schedule a massage or a facial and make sure to hit the gym. By taking care of Mommy and making yourself feel good, this will flow over into everyone in your family getting taken care of and not neglected. A little goes a long way in this category.

Significant Other Support- Don't be afraid to ask your partner for help with family responsibilities. This isn't a one-woman show. We as females are harvesters by nature. It has been engrained in our minds to take on that matriarchal role of

HAJJAR: PAGE 35

Computer Problems in the
Veteran's Administration

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

There have been a lot of news stories about the computer security problems at Target and other stores. Have you heard much about the computer problems with the Veterans Administration?

A software glitch allowed users to access one another's private information.

The government wants veterans to file online, but now there is a very real fear about security and identity theft. We put our faith in the government to keep our information and country secure. They need to do a better job!

Military retirees and active duty troops are concerned the pension cuts will be only the beginning of benefits erosion. There are a lot of efficiencies that can be made in the Defense Department, perhaps in the procurement arena. Balancing the budget on the backs of our veterans and active duty troops is not the way to go. As mentioned before, it just sends the wrong message.

Another area of concern is the level of unemployment among veterans. Government statistics show that 588 thousand veterans are unemployed. This number is expected to rise as personnel cuts begin in all the branches of military service. We must look to provide employment for our returning warriors.

There is a push for companies to reach out to veterans and get them into the civilian workforce. If you are an employer, I urge you to hire a veteran. They have a work ethic that is not always found in the general population.

I recently came across some interesting information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. There were approximately 21,250,000 veterans alive this last December, down 26,000 from the month before. The veteran population is shrinking. The United States has lost over two-thirds of its veterans in the last fifty years.

Not surprising given the large numbers that served during World War II and Korea. It also means that there are fewer veterans serving as elected officials at all levels. There is not always an appreciation of the sacrifices that are necessary to protect our

freedoms.

In the elections held last November there were a low number of voters who turned out. As an example, the turnout in Haverhill was less than twenty-five per cent. This coming November will be another election where we will be voting for state and national officials. It is an important election. No matter which party you favor, it is important to vote.

I will continue this message from now until November. Too many complain about both parties but do not vote. Way too many have paid the ultimate sacrifice and here we are, taking it all for granted. Pay attention, plan to vote.



John Lenotte, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4, Haverhill MA; Past Commander, Department of Massachusetts, The American Legion; contact: John.LDistrict8@verizon.net

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FROM 1: SSGT. DUDLEY FARQUHAR

seal off the one escape route as we tried to leave, attacking us with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. You could not see them—but they saw you! We were caught in a cross-fire.”

Dudley was stationed at Americal’s base in Chu Lai in I Corps, the northernmost tactical military zone in South Vietnam. Strategically, I Corps was the most important zone. It bordered the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating South Vietnam from Communist North Vietnam. It was close to the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

It was also the most difficult to protect not only because of its size (10,000 square miles) but also its terrain. On the west lay Laos, where jungle-covered mountains hid supply bases of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Viet Cong guerrillas. On the east were the flat, wet coastal plains covered by rice paddies extending to the beaches and the South China Sea.

“We would cover all of I Corps, park our track vehicle and then send out foot patrols. Our search and destroy missions usually lasted from 30 to 45 days—routing the enemy, searching for rice and weapons caches. Our only outside contact was through airdrops by choppers that brought in needed supplies and “medevac-ed” the wounded and KIA.”

The Americal, the Army largest division in Vietnam, fought side by side with the Marines in I Corps, later taking over after the Marines left the area.

Warriors—close calls with death
When Dudley drove the “point” track

or lead armored personnel carrier, his “Kit Carson” scout, named Cau, was an NVA defector who knew exactly where the NVA had planted land mines, and warned Dudley in advance—as a result, saving a great number of American lives. He had deserted the North Vietnamese Army and rallied to the Americans through the program “Open Arms” (“Chieu Hoi”). Formerly the paymaster for an entire NVA division, he defected when the NVA killed his whole family after denying him leave for the birth of his first child.

“Not all our men trusted him but I did. He earned my trust. For three months, he sat on top of the track next to me and warned me in advance of land mines. Our demolition teams would then go out and explode them. The secondary explosions confirmed his word.

“As sergeant, you must discern not only whom you can trust, but with what. Survival in combat means focusing on the present moment. If you get distracted, that’s when the will enemy get you.”

Descended from a Scottish clan known as warriors, Dudley Farquhar got bored when stationed in Germany, and volunteered, at first unsuccessfully, for Vietnam—finally writing to then-Senator Ted Kennedy for his help. His great grandfather, Ira Dudley Farquhar, U.S. vice-consul in Barcelona, Spain, during WWI served in WWII as Major, U.S. Army, Military Intelligence. His uncle, Michael Farquhar, served as Company Commander of a 101st Airborne unit in Vietnam.



Sergeant Dudley H. Farquhar, 1st Squadron, 1st Cav, Americal Division (23d Infantry), lays a wreath at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, DC, honoring the Americal Division’s men who sacrificed their lives for our freedoms. Dudley has visited the Memorial many times since attending its dedication in 1982. “For Vietnam veterans, the true heroes are those who died. A survivor is one who escapes with his life, or outlives his friends and comrades.”

From earliest childhood, Dudley has been an “overcomer.” Raised by 15 different foster families, he finally found a loving home with Buddy and Joyce Clark, of Merrimac, who shaped his values and modeled a life of giving and service to others.

While in Vietnam, Dudley contracted malaria, his fever spiking to 106.5 degrees. Direct exposure to Agent Orange penetrated his system through open sores and wounds and lay dormant until it resulted in end-stage liver disease, diagnosed in March 2011. He received a liver transplant in September 2012, after 15 months on the wait list.

A promise to God—a vow fulfilled
One horrific memory still sticks in Dudley’s mind. “It was March 18, 1970. We were out on patrol. Four of our men were blown to bits. Totally unidentifiable. I had to go out with a few others to gather their remains into body bags. I’ll never forget that date...

“It was in Vietnam that I found myself talking to God,” says Dudley. “I promised Him, ‘God, get me through this, and when I go home I will become a changed man. I will serve others.’”

The Lord answered his prayer. And Dudley kept his promise.

In the more than 40 years he’s been home, he has worked tirelessly as a national advocate for veterans—POW/MIAs and families, homeless veterans, veterans in VA hospitals, soldiers in Afghanistan—and children in shelters. During his 34 years with Lucent Technologies, North Andover (formerly Western Electric and AT&T), he was one of the youngest elected chapter presidents of the Telephone Pioneers, the prestigious charitable group founded by Alexander Graham Bell. Through his tireless efforts he has touched numerous lives for the good. For him, it’s purely a labor of love. A few of his projects since returning home:

- Operation TRIUMPH (“To-Return-

Immediately-Unauthorized-MIAs-and-POWs-Homeward”), to raise public awareness and pressure government officials for a full accounting of the nearly 2500 yet unaccounted for, and specifically the 64 missing Massachusetts men...

- POW/MIA Bracelets, his first project in the 1970s, gave hope to then-POWs that America had not forgotten them...

- “Three-Flag” Pins (American, POW/MIA, state) for all 50 states, all service branches, took 10 years to complete...

- POW/MIA Postage Stamp issued in 1995, a 12-year effort, with Lowell Post Office (opening on Sunday!) issuing the first!...

- Mass. law signed in 1986 mandated that every city, town fly one POW/MIA flag, and was signed by Governor Michael Dukakis... • First New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans in Haverhill, association with Mass. Vigil Society...

- Operation Platoon Mom, by AT&T Telephone Pioneers, that sends coffee to ground troops in Iraq and Afghanistan...

- Northeast Family Institute’s shelter for troubled boys, where Dudley, as project chairman for 27 years, brings joy and hope into their lives.

Dudley survived for a purpose. He has turned every misfortune into an opportunity to serve and bless others.

Jesus said: “...whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26, 28).



Helen Mooradian is our Valley Patriot Hero columnist and a former business writer. She is also a member of the Merrimack Valley Tea Party. You can email Helen at hsmoor@verizon.net



“Three-flag” pins—featuring the American flag, the POW/MIA flag, and the state flag—represent all 50 states and each branch of the Military, as well as some countries serving in Vietnam. The red ribbon on top is inscribed, “Bring Them Home.” The 65 die-cut pins were designed by Staff Sgt. Dudley Farquhar, Americal Division, 1/1st Cav, and national veterans advocate, to raise funds for POW/MIA families. A man who knows his purpose in life, Dudley says, “In the memory bank of time and space, Vietnam has a tendency to linger, but we as survivors of that experience need to move on. I chose advocacy as my course of action for moving on.”

HAJJAR: FROM PAGE 34

caretaker. If you are working full-time, keeping up with the household chores as well is difficult. Doing the laundry or emptying the dishwasher isn’t going to kill your man or challenge his manlihood either. He will make it through.

There is no fantasy life. We are living in real time. We can’t do it all and that’s ok. We will not be burned at the stake for it. We will all survive and everything will get done, and if it doesn’t, just put it on the agenda because tomorrow is another day.

The next time you take your child to the park to play on the swings, just remember that as a child, the see saw was always a fun thing to do. Just appreciate life’s ups and downs and enjoy the ride.

Cheryl Hajjar is the author of *Indigo Pixies* and lives in North Andover Massachusetts. You can e-mail Cheryl at: cheryllhajjar@gmail.com



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